INSURRECTIONISM IN SOUTH AFRICA: THE PAN-AFRICANIST CONGRESS AND THE POQO MOVEMENT, 1959 - 1965

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ABSTRACT

The thesis discusses the history of a black South African political organisation, the Pan-Africanist Congress during the brief period of its effective influence inside South Africa: from 1959 to the mid-1960s. The PAC is identified as a populist movement, that is a movement of people who in one way or another were attempting to resist the impulses of an industrialising society. Its ideology therefore tended to stress communal as opposed to class-bound social identities. Beginning as a small dissident group within the dominant African political organisation, the African National Congress, the PAC was born after a decade of mass-based campaigning had distanced the ANC from its earlier nationalist position. The PAC acquired a following in only a few places, normally where its rival, the ANC, was weak and badly organised. It only approached the dimensions of a mass movement in the Western Cape where its militant, racially assertive rhetoric attracted migrant workers who were affected by a twin set of pressures: the efforts by the authorities to exclude them from urban society and the restructuring of their home communities in the Transkei. After the PAC's banning in March 1960 these people began to play a crucial role in transforming the organisation from a cluster of conspiritorial nuclei drawn mainly from the middle class into the popular movement Pogo, in the process injecting it with their own material and ideological preoccupations. In 1963 the PAC's exile leadership attempted to mobilise this following in a nation-wide insurrection but most of their preparations were known to the police who anticipated their plans with thousands of arrests.

PAC-inspired violence was therefore localised and confined mainly to the Transkei and the Western Cape. Two chapters examine the local social tensions which underlay PAC/Pogo violence in Paarl and the Tembu districts of the Southern Transkei. By way of contrast the development of the movement amongst a non-migrant constituency is examined in a chapter on the PAC's progress in East London and Pretoria. The thesis concludes with an examination of the PAC in exile: here divorced from its popular base and from the political environment which gave rise to its ideological concerns the movement lost its vigour and integrity: a classic instance of the tragedy of exile politics.

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DECLARATION

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INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on a black South African political organisation, the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC). The PAC was formed in 1959 by former members of the main African organisation of the time, the African National Congress (ANC). The PAC could be distinguished from the ANC by the stridency of its rhetoric, its appetite for confrontation, and its race-conscious ideology. With the ANC it was prohibited in 1960 after police killed sixty-nine members of an unarmed crowd which had gathered in the southern Transvaal township of Sharpeville in response to a PAC-led anti-pass campaign. Despite the banning of their organisation, the PAC's adherents continued to be active within South Africa with preparations which were intended to culminate in a massive general uprising in 1963. In anticipation of this the police arrested several thousand people whom they suspected of PAC affiliation but despite police action PAC-inspired groups were responsible for a number of violent attacks in the Cape Province and the Transkei between 1962 and 1965. Thereafter evidence of Pan-Africanist activities inside the country has been very sporadic and it has functioned principally in exile.

* * * * *

In South Africa the juxtaposition of ethnically and economically determined patterns of social stratification has produced complex political responses from the dominated sections of the population. In those responses which can be conceived of as protest or resistance[1] two tendencies have been especially

noticeable. First there has been the unambiguous political expression of specific class interests. These, with the development of industrialisation and the progressive limitations on African social mobility, were to become increasingly proletarian in character. Over time they came to be represented by the development of African trade unionism, revolutionary socialist groups, and, to an extent, by the longest-established black political organisation, the African National Congress.[2] In general, class-derived political assertions, whether petty bourgeois or proletarian in character, have in the black South African context adhered to the ideal of a racially integrated society and in consequence have eschewed the tenets of romantic nationalism: emphasis on linguistic, racial, cultural or religious identity. This abstention has been partly the consequence of external influences on the development of African political responses[3] but it has also flowed from the culturally integrative effects of a rapid and brutal process of industrialisation.[4]

The second tendency has been the obverse of the first. While some political actors have been motivated to emphasise the social identities created by the swift formation of an urban industrial culture, others have attempted to resist the social implications of such a culture. Social identity and social conflict is understood by them in terms of race rather than class and in consequence the African community is ascribed with an organic solidarity derived from a pre-industrial past. One of the objects of this study will be to establish just why certain South African resistance movements developed in this direction rather than in the other. In the post-second world

war period the Pan-Africanist Congress has been the most powerful and dramatic expression of such an ideological tendency. Though its role as a significant force in black South African politics was short-lived, as a principle bearer of the nationalist and populist tradition in black politics it was important.

Several commentaries on South African political history have referred to two intellectual traditions which have characterised the development of African political assertions. Gail Gerhart, for example, has distinguished between the 'integrationist' perspective of mainstream African political thought and an 'orthodox' nationalism which placed its emphasis on African cultural, racial and organisational autonomy.[5] 'Orthodox' nationalism can be detected in a variety of forms: religious movements, cultural expressions, and, of course, political groups. Gerhart's book traces such an ideology through the history of the Congress Youth League in the 1940s, the Pan-Africanists during the 1950s, and the Black Consciousness movement of the 1970s. To describe this tradition as populist as well as nationalist helps to explain its origins and essential characteristics.

Populism is a concept which has invited heterodox definition. It has been understood as a movement drawn from specific social groups at a particular point in their historical development;[6] it has been discussed as an ideological reflex of opposed classes at moments of hegemonic crisis;[7] it has been viewed as part of a developmental strategy employed by ruling elites with weak social bases;[8] it has been described as

an emphasis which can be detected in almost all varieties of political discourse.[9] Here the usage of the term will roughly conform to its application in its original Eastern European context.[10] In this sense populism was an ideology of protest emerging from the periphery rather than from the centres of political authority. It reflected either vicariously or directly the impulses of social classes caught up in the process of transition to capitalism. Its referents were of rural origin though a populist movement might find its social roots in towns amongst the most recently urbanised. A populist vision sees society not in class terms but rather as an integrated community under threat from outside. In their Eastern European environment populist movements idealised the qualities of a (mythical) self-sufficient peasant society. Political morality was seen to repose in the general will; the task of political movements was to reflect the essence of popular preoccupations. The latter were characterised by populist spokesmen in ideas which were communitarian, apocalyptic and reactionary. Society's future development was prescribed in terms of a resurrected and adapted past in which the traumas of industrialisation could be ameliorated if not avoided altogether through the evocation of small village culture. Emerging on the outskirts of wealth and power, populist movements were characteristically anti-state and in consequence antipathetic to any form of organisation: populist movements tended to be weakly structured entities built around great leaders rather than elaborate bureaucracies. As Eric Wolf has put it:

> The peasant utopia is the free village, untrammelled by tax collectors, labor recruiters, large landowners, officials. Ruled over, but never ruling, they also lack acquaintance with the operation of the state as a complex machinery, experiencing it only as a 'cold monster'. Against this hostile force, they had learned, even their traditional power holders provided but a weak shield, even though they were on occasion willing to defend them if it proved to their own interest. Thus, for the peasant, the state is a negative quantity, an evil, to be replaced in short shrift by their own 'homemade' social order. That order, they believe, can be run without the state; hence, peasants in rebellion are natural anarchists. 11

Populist movements emerge as a strong force under conditions of 'uneven development', that is the social and geographical inequalities and the economic disjunctures resultant from the asymmetrical advance of capitalism from its original centres of growth.[12] In this sense the socially incoherent nature of populist movements is a reflection of the inchoate quality of capitalist social relationships in transitional societies: other social antagonisms may with some justification be perceived by their members as being of greater significance than those suggested by the terminology of class. The members of populist movements are usually those whom industrial capitalism has failed to materially and culturally completely encapsulate:

> . . . the social action that forms the basis of the populist movement may be viewed as motivated by an indirect confrontation with problems of economic development. It is the fact that this confrontation has been indirect which makes populist movements distinct from other types of social movement. Populism has emerged when ideologies and movements which more directly confront industrialisation and its consequences have come to be regarded as alien or inappropriate or both. 13.

Populism has normally occurred in predominantly rural societies undergoing the initial stages of capitalist transformation: Russian Narodniks, Eastern European peasant political parties, Peronists in Argentine and the Tanganyika African National Union during decolonisation are all movements which have been categorised as populist. In contrast to the societies in which these movements flourished, post-second world war South Africa would not at first sight offer promising terrain for the growth of populism. By the 1950s South Africa's population was relatively urbanised,[14] primary and secondary industry outweighed agriculture in their contribution to the gross national product,[15] there existed a large and evidently class-conscious proletariat,[16] agriculture had been recently restructured on a large-scale capitalist basis,[17] and remaining peasant cultivation was incapable by itself of sustaining a significant section of the population.[18] With such conditions in mind some recent marxist historiography[19] has ascribed to the development of African political movements a steady evolution of working class (and hence socialist) orientation disrupted only occasionally by petty bourgeois manipulation of ethnic consciousness. This argument has a certain merit: it is the case that in contrast to anti-colonial movements elsewhere in Africa black South Africans have had a much richer socialist tradition to draw upon[20] and their political parties have a long history of involvement with organised labour.[21] Nevertheless in these authorities' efforts to reduce 'national struggle' to a form of class struggle[22] there have been considerable simplifications. A case in point is Bernard Magubane's distinction

between 'two strains, national and nationalist . . . jockeying for control at various times in the history of the ANC'. The 'nationalist' strain, according to Magubane, in contrast to 'national' sentiment was 'narrow' and 'chauvinist' and was 'in the PAC's scheme of things . . . distorted out of all proportion for egotistical reasons'.[23] Here the implication is that within African nationalism there are two sorts of impulses, one healthy, positive, outward-looking, and influenced by class consciousness, and one pathological, destructive and anti-socialist.[24] Such a typology, whatever its descriptive qualities, does not really have any analytic weight. As we shall see, populist as opposed to clearly class-oriented ideology has been at times a strong force in African politics and the reasons for this cannot be adequately understood by reference to only 'egotistical reasons'.

In South Africa the process of industrialisation has been distinguished by the state's efforts to halt the progress of its social corollary: the urbanisation of an African proletariat. While only partially successful, mechanisms such as the pass laws, influx control and the political development of African-occupied rural areas, the Bantustans, did have the effect of inhibiting the growth of the permanent urban African population[25] and of preserving in an urban context for a substantial section of the labour force the relevance of rurally-derived culture.[26] Among South African urban migrant workers in the 1960s populist political ideology could be expected to resonate strongly. Their experience of proletarianisation was often recent;[27] they came from relatively socially undifferentiated societies;[28] they

lived in towns in so far as it was possible with other members of their local home communities;[29] many still attached an importance to their claims to land-access;[30] they were the least privileged and most marginal elements in the urban population.[31]

Put in the context of populism a study of the Pan-Africanist Congress can assume a wider significance than the filling of an historiographical lacuna.[32] For South Africa's particular route to a developed capitalist society inevitably generates a powerful populist[33] as well as class-bound opposition and no understanding of South African political conflict can be complete without a recognition of this. The PAC offers an excellent illustration of a populist movement. Its understanding of its social environment was in terms of community rather than class, its perception of the world outside the community was essentially conspiritorial - a common trait of populist movements,[34] the values and ideals it endorsed were purported to have originated from a pre-capitalist rural social order. Its leaders attributed great potential power to a supposed popular susceptibility to revolt. In place of structured organisation they relied on devination, intuition and a Sorelian concept of myth[35] as means for general mobilization. Essentially parochial and circumscribed in their world-view the Pan-Africanists understood neither the power of the state apparatus nor the complexity of the society it rested upon.

It can be objected that the Pan Africanists were an urban phenomenon,[36] that the movement sprang from the same social groups which provided the ANC with its leadership, that its

petty bourgeois ideologues at most reflected vicariously[37] (and opportunistically) the political reactions of proletarianised peasants. In this study it will be demonstrated that however socially distanced the PAC leaders were from the groups which might be expected to form the base of a populist movement, that nevertheless they were to inspire a mass following within such a group, a following which infused their sentimental natavistic rhetoric with considerable energy and meaning. In the process the followers took the grandiose abstractions of the leaders and coloured them prosaically with more immediate and localised concerns.[38] But in as much as the PAC was a mass movement it was rooted in a transitional social order and as with populist movements elsewhere incapable of producing permanent, deep-rooted organisational structures. This, it has been suggested in the case of populist movements in general, is because:

> . . . populism produces social and political movements rather than highly structured parties . . . the reason for this is that populism is so social, so convinced that the political does not really fundamentally matter . . . sees politics in a single apocalyptic and restorative need; not as an ongoing fallible and necessary activity. 39

Isolated from this order by exile the PAC leaders could only degenerate, for they had no organization to sustain their influence and integrity and their rhetoric led them only to fantasy.

The following chapters describe the PAC's emergence, growth and decline. Chapter One examines early African political assertions from the ANC's foundation in 1912. Chapter Two is concerned with the development of the ANC between the establishment of the Youth League in 1944 and the fission which led to the

formation of the PAC. The ANC's acquisition of a mass base in the townships of the Witwatersrand, Durban and the Eastern Cape, and the infusion into the organisation of men and women with a background of activism in the Communist Party and trade unions helped to alter the ideological perceptions of the ANC's leadership. Their reorientation away from the original self-determinist ethos of the ANC Youth League brought to the surface in certain areas latent tensions between lower and upper echelon leaders. These resulted eventually in a split in the organisation.

Chapter Three contains an analysis of the PAC's first major campaign. Pre-empting the ANC, which was also planning opposition to the pass laws, the PAC instructed its followers to offer themselves en masse for arrest at police stations in contravention of influx control regulations. Because of the PAC leaders' neglect of any systematic organisation their campaign failed to elicit a national following, but in two very different African communities in Vereeniging and Cape Town, local responses to the PAC call were impressive and helped to generate an illusory atmosphere of political crisis. To explain the localised nature of the PAC's following the chapter analyses the structure and history of the African population in Vereeniging and Cape Town.

Chapter Four provides an overall narrative framework for understanding the developments which succeeded the prohibition of the two main African political organisations in 1960. The ANC and the PAC both spawned violent insurgencies each of which reflected the different characteristics of their parent bodies. In the case of the PAC insurgents their development was complicated by the dual nature of their evolution. While the

leaders tried from exile in Basutoland to create from top downwards a revolutionary clandestine network, in the Western Cape, bands of PAC followers were creating their own movement. In the process they reinterpreted externally-derived ideology and strategic conceptions in terms of their own particular local concerns.

In consequence in the different areas where the PAC developed a following it acquired different characteristics which varied according to the circumstances of the various groups which participated in its activities. Chapters Five, Six and Seven discuss the development of the PAC's insurgent successor, Pogo. In four different areas, in each case putting the movement in the context of local traditions of political resistance. One of the premises of this study is that the understanding of African political movement cannot be adequately accomplished without a microsociological concern. On the whole the poverty and mutual geographical isolation of, as well as the political restrictions placed on different African communities in South Africa have inhibited the growth of sophisticated and effective political bureaucracies among them. In such circumstances local determinants are frequently crucial to the process of popular political mobilization.

The final chapter describes the Pan-Africanists in exile and decline. It serves as a commentary on the transient nature and peculiar vulnerability of populist movements.

References:

1. I find Beinart and Bundy's definition of resistance useful: 'Instances of overt political action that protest against or attempt to end political and economic pressures, such actions assuming forms not recognised by the state as legal or permissable'. William Beinart and Colin Bundy, 'State intervention and rural resistance' in Martin Klein (ed.), Peasants in Africa, Sage, Beverley Hills, 1980, p. 272.

2. For discussion of the extent to which the ANC's development can be related to specific class interests within it see: Tom Lodge, 'The destruction of Sophiatown', Journal of Modern African Studies, 19, 1, 1981, pp. 107-132.

3. These include the socialisation provided by mission-school education syllabuses, the co-optive efforts of private business institutions, the direct political influence of liberals and socialists. For examples of each see respectively: Peter Walshe, The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa, University of California, Berkerley, 1971, Chapter One; Brian Willan, 'Solomon Plaatje, De Beers and the old Kimberley Tram Shed', The Societies of Southern Africa in the 19th and 20th centuries, Vol, 8, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London, 1979; Martin Legassick, 'Liberalism, Social Control and Liberation in South Africa', unpublished seminar paper, 1975, pp. 11-15; Gail Gerhart, Black Power in South Africa, University of California, Berkerley, 1978, pp. 111-116.

4. For the emergence of a cultural synthesis in South African townships see: Dave Coplan, The Urbanization of African Performing Arts in South Africa, Ph.D. Dissertation, Indiana University, October 1980, and Eddie Koch, 'Without visible means of subsistence: Slumyard culture in Johannesburg, 1918-1940', University of the Witwatersrand History Workshop, 1981.

5. Gerhart, op. cit., pp. 88-89.

6. Donald MacRae, 'Populism as an Ideology' in Ghita Ionescu and Ernest Gellner, Populism, Weidenfield and Nicholson, London, 1969, p. 163.

7. Ernesto Laclau, Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory, NLB, London, 1977, pp. 143-198.

8. Tom Nairn, The Break-Up of Modern Britain: Crisis and Neo-Nationalism, NLB, London, 1977, p. 340; John Saul, 'Africa', in Ionescu and Gellner, op. cit., p. 146.

9. Peter Wolsey, 'The concept of Populism' in Ionescu and Gellner, op. cit., p. 245.

10. George Jackson, 'Peasant political movements in Eastern Europe' in Henry Landsberger, Rural Protest: Peasant Movements and Social Change, Macmillan, London, 1974, especially pp. 271-287.

11. Eric Wolf, Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century, Faber, London, 1971, pp. 294-295.

12. Nairn, op. cit., pp. 335-336 and John Saul, State and Revolution in Eastern Africa, Heinemann, London, 1979, pp. 402-407 and Angus Stewart, 'The Social Roots' in Ionescu and Gellner, op. cit., p. 186.

13. Stewart, op. cit., p. 181.

14. One third of the African population was living in towns by 1960 (Monica Wilson and Leonard Thompson, Oxford History of South Africa, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1971, vol. 2, p. 173) and a still higher proportion depended on wages earned in the urban sector. In the heyday of Eastern European populism between two thirds and three quarters of the population depended on peasant agriculture (Jackson, op. cit., p. 274).

15. Manufacturing had overtaken agriculture in its contribution to gross output by 1930 (Martin Legassick, 'South Africa: capital accumulation and violence', Economy and Society, 3, 1, 1974, p. 269).

16. By 1945 250,000 black people were employed in manufacturing and over a million in mining and urban domestic service (ibid., p. 268). For analysis of African labour movements in the 1940s see: Baruch Hirson, 'The mines, the state and African Trade Unions' and 'Yours, for the union: the making of an African trade union movement' and 'African trade unions in the Transvaal, 1935-1947', papers delivered to the South African Social History Workshop, Institute for Commonwealth Studies, London, May-June, 1980.

17. See Mike Morris, 'The development of capitalism in Southern African agriculture: class struggle in the countryside', Economy and Society, 5, 3, 1976, pp. 292-343.

18. In 1960, in the Transkei, the most agriculturally self-sufficient of the Bantustans, more than half the districts produced less than half their food requirements. In the northern Transvaal, African-occupied districts produced less than 25 per cent of their food requirements (Charles Simkins, 'Agricultural production in the African reserves of South Africa', African Studies Institute seminar paper, University of the Witwatersrand, 1980, p. 14).

19. See for examples: Dan O'Meara, 'The 1946 African mine-workers' strike and the political economy of South Africa', Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics, 13, 2, 1975; H. J. and R. E. Simons, Class and Colour in South Africa, 1850-1960, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1969, p. 608; Bernard Magubane, The Political Economy of Race and Class in South Africa, Monthly Review Press, New York, 1979, Chapter Eleven.

20. Apart from the influence of the oldest Communist Party on the African continent, sources of socialist inspiration during the inter-war period included the Johannesburg Jewish Workers' Club, the trotskyite Lenin Club and similarly oriented Workers' Party, the syndicalist Industrial Workers' of Africa, the National Liberation League and various other ephemeral groups.

21. To cite the three important African trade union movements of the 1920s, the 1940s and the 1950s, the Industrial and Commercial workers Union, the Council of Non-European Trade Unions, and the South African Congress of Trade Unions, all three at stages in their history were linked with the ANC or the Communist Party either through alliances or common office holders.

22. To quote the Simonses (op. cit., p. 608) on the establishment of the Congress Alliance: 'The class struggle had merged with the struggle for liberation' or Martin Legassick ('Class and Nationalism in South African protest', unpublished seminar paper, p. 19): 'The national struggle, authentically carried out, is the means of destruction of South African capitalism'.

23. Magubane, op. cit., pp. 308-311.

24. In this context CIA connections are frequently attributed to the PAC. Brian Bunting (Moses Kotane: South African Revolutionary, Inkululeko Publications, London, 1973, p. 237) states that the CIA was involved in the PAC's foundation but cites no evidence to support this contention.

25. The population of 197 of the 308 African townships in the 'white' areas South Africa was reduced during the 1960s through resettlement policies. The population of the Bantustans during the corresponding period increased by 70 per cent (though much of this increase was caused by the eviction of surplus labour from white farms). See John Kane Berman, Soweto, Black Revolt, White Reaction, Ravan, Johannesburg, 1978, pp. 82-83.

26. See Philip and Iona Meyer, Townsmen and Tribesmen, Oxford University Press, Cape Town, 1974, especially pp. 90-165.

27. Simkins's recent research suggests that substantial decline in reserve agriculture in many of the reserves began as late as the 1950s (Simkins, op. cit., p. 19) though what is currently a more orthodox view contends that reserve agricultural productivity was falling sharply into a state of collapse during the 1930s (Colin Bundy, Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry, Heinemann, London, 1979, p. 234). As subsequent chapters will demonstrate, many of the PAC's recruits were men who obviously grew up with peasant rather than proletarian life expectations.

28. Research on Basotho rural society suggests that what social inequality does exist in a labour reserve in terms of access to land, household labour and migrant wages does not necessarily give rise to social conflict because of the cyclical nature of rural social differentiation. See Andrew Spiegel, 'Rural differentiation in Lesotho', Work in Progress, no. 8, May 1979, pp. 27-28; Colin Murray, Families Divided, the impact of migrant Labour in Lesotho, Ravan, Johannesburg, 1983.

29. See for examples: Monica Wilson and Archie Mafeje, Langa: A Study of Social Groups in an African Township, Oxford University Press, Cape Town, 1963, pp. 49-50.

30. In a survey executed in 1980, land holding, despite the impossibility of a viable peasant agricultural sector, was found to have significant value attached to it in the opinions of migrant workers. See: Report of the Buthelezi Commission, Volume 2, Durban, 1982.

31. An important proportion of the urban migrant population would have no legal status whatsoever having evaded rather than conformed with influx control regulations.

32. The only substantial published analysis of the emergence and development of the PAC is by Gail Gerhart (op. cit.). Her work is primarily concerned with the tracing of an intellectual tradition. She does not examine the PAC as a social movement and her few remarks about the nature of its social following are thinly substantiated.

33. Quite apart from the obvious salience of populist themes to people in the ambivalent social position of oscillatory migrant workers, class distinctions and class cohesions within black society are often overlaid by the racial solidarity resulting from white control of political machinery and economic resources.

34. Peter Wiles, 'A syndrome, not a doctrine: some elementary theses on populism', Ghita Ionescu and Ernest Gellner, op. cit., p. 167.

35. See Georges Sorel, Reflections on Violence, Collier Books, New York, 1961, pp. 122-123: '. . . use must be made of a body of images which, by intuition alone, and before any considered analyses are made, is capable of evoking as an undivided whole the mass of sentiments which corresponds to the different manifestations of the war undertaken by Socialists against modern society'.

36. This is the way they are depicted in Gerhart. She, on the basis of information gleaned from interviews taken mainly from Transvaal leaders identifies the main PAC constituency as 'young, urban lower and lower middle class Africans: townees, 'location boys', tsotsis' (op. cit., p. 225). Later chapters in this study will show that her informants misled her. The PAC developed a mass following

only in the Western Cape and it is possible that Transvaal leaders did not fully understand the characteristics of their movement in that distant region.

37. In the sense of Tom Nairn's 'urban intellectuals' invoking peasant virtues which they have experienced only through train windows on their summer holidays' (Nairn, op. cit., p. 340). The Russian Narodniks were such a group.

38. See Wolf, op. cit., p. xv.

39. MacRae, op. cit., pp. 156-157.

CHAPTER ONE

BLACK POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS, 1912-1950

Separatist as opposed to integrationist political philosophies are an important theme in the intellectual tradition of twentieth century black South African politics. Until the second world war, though, because of the generally elitist character of African political activity, separatism was a position represented by individuals rather than groups. It was only with the foundation in 1944 of the African National Congress Youth League that exponents of a separatist ideal based on notions of racial solidarity began to cohere as a distinct political sect.

The 1940s were a watershed in African politics, a period in which a swift expansion of the black labour force, its increasing deployment in industry, and the revival of trade unionism, all helped to radicalise African political organisations. In an environment of popular militancy manifested by industrial action and community protest the aspirations of an African middle class assumed a fresh significance within the context of formal political movements. But a necessary preamble to the examination of these processes is the following survey of African political responses from the founding of the first national organisation until the beginning of the second world war.

* * * * *

In January 1912 there assembled in Bloemfontein several hundred of South Africa's most prominent African citizens. These

men, after singing Tiyo Soga's Xhosa hymn 'Fulfil thy promise, God of truth', unanimously resolved to form the South African Native National Congress (SANNC). Its formation marked a clear break with the past. Previously African politics had been centred on electoral activity in the Cape Province where blacks with the required qualifications could vote and stand for office. Their voice was significant. In 1900 they constituted nearly half the electorate in five constituencies and some believed that enfranchised Africans could use their vote to elect representatives who would be sympathetic to African aspirations. The years succeeding the Peace of Vereeniging witnessed the declining force of this argument. The SANNC's founding marked the ascendency in middle-class African circles that African interests could best be promoted not through sympathetic intermediaries but rather by action by Africans themselves.

There were several reasons for this change in opinion. Among some members of the African elite hopes raised initially by the British defeat of the Republics had been disappointed. Despite African protestations of Imperial loyalty intermingled with polite reproach at the prevalent discrimination against black men of 'training, character and ability',[1] the British government made it clear that its paramount concern was with the question of white unity in South Africa. African hopes that the Cape franchise arrangements would be extended to the defeated Republics were in vain, and preparations for the Act of Union indicated that existing rights would not be respected in future. The Act not only removed the theoretical right of blacks to be elected to parliamentary seats but also provided for the removal of the franchise from African voters through a two-thirds vote of

both Houses in joint session. Nor, by 1912, was African concern limited to constitutional issues. The first post-Union administration, responding to mining's labour demands and the disquiet of white farmers squeezed between capitalist agricultural companies on the one hand and competitive African peasants on the other, moved swiftly to consolidate support from these groups. Breaking contract was made a criminal offence, exclusion of Africans from skilled industrial jobs was sanctioned, and in 1911 the Land Bill threatened to prohibit African rural land ownership or occupation outside the reserves. Obviously there was more at stake here than the interests of that small group who initially through education at mission institutions had come to form an identifiable petty-bourgeoisie. The Land Act of 1913 and complementary labour legislation were the legal tools employed to destroy a whole class of peasant producers, forcing them into already crowded reserves or driving them into new and arduous social relationships. The group of men assembled at Bloemfontein in 1912 would have been well aware of the wider dimensions of the social tragedy being enacted around them.[2] But they had a particular concern, the fear of any petty bourgeoisie at a time of crisis, of being thrust back into the ranks of the urban and rural poor.[3] Above all the SANNC was to represent the concerns of the small professional middle class. Its first president was John Dube, headmaster of the Ohlange Institute in Natal, its Secretary Solomon Plaatje, one-time interpreter and editor of a Kimberley newspaper, and its treasurer Pixley Ka Izaka Seme, a London-trained advocate. These were men who retained close ties with the African aristocracy, the rural chieftaincy, who, while anxious for the general

advancement and 'upliftment of the race',[4] were also conservatives, interested in protecting a moral and social order they correctly perceived to be under attack. Congress was intended to function first as a national forum to discuss issues affecting Africans and second as an organised pressure group agitating for change through 'peaceful propaganda'.[5] Intended methods included the election to legislative bodies of Congress sympathisers, protests, and, finally, 'passive action or continued movement'.[6]

In the first six years of its existence Congress contented itself with less dramatic measures. African leaders were keen to demonstrate their loyalty for the duration of the first world war. The SANNC was dominated by Cape-educated men who consistently tended to be less aggressive than their Transvaal colleagues. John Dube, born in Natal and educated in America, thought in much the same terms as the Cape men, announcing his intention to rely on 'the sense of common justice and love of freedom so innate in the British character'.[7] Delegations went to Britain in 1914 and 1919 to request Imperial intervention in South Africa.

In 1918 there was a discernable shift in the SANNC's position. On the Rand Congress leaders were supporting striking municipal workers, they were involved in a militant anti-pass campaign, and in early 1920 Congress organisers were addressing public meetings of mineworkers just before the great African mineworkers' strike that year.[8] Plaatje came away from the annual SANNC conference in August 1918 most disturbed. As he put it in a letter to De Beers in Kimberley:

> The ten Transvaal delegates came to the Congress with a concord and a determination that was perfectly astounding to our customary native demeanor at conferences. They spoke almost in unison, in short sentences, nearly all of which began and and ended with the word 'strike'. 9

What had happened? First of all, wartime industrialisation had expanded the black urban population and industrial labour force, especially in the Transvaal. With black wages pegged at 1914 levels, sharp inflation, and municipal reluctance to provide adequate services and housing for this population, there had been a dramatic deterioration in standards of living. Less affluent middle class Africans shared many of the experiences of African workers: their incomes were not appreciably higher and they lived in the same miserable urban slums.[10] With the expansion of the manufacturing workforce and the example of immediate post-war white labour unrest, African workers were becoming increasingly class-conscious. Politically this situation was reflected in the developing interest taken in blacks by white socialists.[11] It was also expressed in the leadership change in Congress. In 1917 the executive was taken over by Transvaal men, under the presidency of Pretoria estate agent S. M. Makgatho. Hardly revolutionaries, nevertheless these men were less immune to the stresses provoked and stimulated by wartime industrial and social developments than the Cape leaders. And in 1918, this leadership, prompted from below, was to articulate the one shilling a day demand accompanying the wave of African strikes in Johannesburg that year.[12]

Though the apparent radicalism of Congress in the immediate post-war period reflected common interests between working class

and petty bourgeois blacks, the SANNC hardly represented a stable class alliance. There was great unease among African political spokesmen at the direction Congress appeared to be taking in the Transvaal. Plaatje's misgivings were shared also by Professor D. D. T. Jabavu: 'Bolshevism and its nihilistic doctrines is enlisting many natives up country. Socialism of the worst calibre is claiming our people'.[13] Plaatje and Jabavu belonged to a group who had for years considered themselves as authentic representatives of the African community; now, suddenly, their role was being questioned. More conservative African politicians were being abused at meetings when they counselled moderation and caution. Nevertheless these people would succeed in guiding Congress along smoother paths in the oncoming decade. But by themselves they could not have accomplished the deradicalisation of the movement. There were other more powerful forces at work.

From 1920 until the accession of the Pact government in 1924 the authorities produced a series of measures which though usually incorporating features that offended the integrationist and meritocratic principles of leading Congressmen, still mollified some of the resentment of petty bourgeois Africans and detached them from the movement set in motion by the popular classes. The 1920 Native Housing Act was a measure of this nature. So too was the provision of first class black railway accommodation. In 1923 the Native Urban Areas Act provided for municipal housing programmes, leasehold in townships and afforded trading opportunities within the new townships. There were plenty of objections to the new arrangements: particularly

disliked were the municipal brewing monopolies enshrined in the Act, but nevertheless they went some way to meeting the SANNC demand for 'some differentiation of treatment . . . between those who were educated and civilised and those who had yet to reach that stage.[14] A final restraining motive among African leaders was that the 1919 pass protests introduced a new social element - the urban unemployed - more volatile, more violent, and much less easy to organise than members of the working class. From 1920, for a few years, Congress's leaders were to be diverted into safer channels; into the Joint Council movement which provided a medium for consultation between black and white liberals, and the advisory Governor General's conferences in which a select group could advance grievances.

From 1922, however, two other organisations had arrived to complicate the African political scene. These were the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU) and the Communist Party of South Africa. The origins of the ICU lay in the early post-war attempts to organise black labour in Cape Town by white socialists. It was founded in 1919 and was quickly to gain prestige through leading a successful dockworkers' strike. Its secretary was a schoolteacher from Nyasaland, Clements Kadalie, a man of great charm and charisma. The Cape Town ICU's following was to spread and link up with other embryonic trade union groupings, first in the ports of the Eastern Province and then in Durban. In each case the movement was structured around powerful and flamboyant personalities, usually from a non-working class background, rather than a systematic organisation. A branch was established in Johannesburg in 1924 and from that year the ICU began to attract the attention of the Communist Party

then seeking to expand its African support. The ICU's transformation into a mass movement only began with its penetration of the countryside, first in rural Natal and then, most dramatically, in the Eastern Transvaal. Here despite the provisions of the 1913 Land Act, a relatively prosperous group of African labour tenants, sharecroppers, and squatters had survived outside the reserves on white land. From the 1920s these people were to be under savage pressures as white farmers, responding to an increased demand for agricultural products, sought to convert quasi-feudal social relationships on the land into capitalist ones. Labour tenants had their land reduced and free labour obligations increased, sharecropper arrangements were transformed into rent-paying tenancies and squatters began to be squeezed off the land altogether. Rural Africans responded in a wave of unrest: refusals to work on the farmer's land, mutilation of animals, threats, assaults, and other forms of insubordination. In their desperation they turned to the ICU, joining it in thousands, attracted by the millenarian undertone of much ICU rhetoric. But, as one of them said, it 'all ended up in speeches':[15] rural expectations of freedom and restoration of land were to be disappointed. All the ICU had to offer were some rather shady land purchase schemes, legal manoeuvres, and attempts to improve conditions by negotiations with farmers. None of these could halt the advance of capitalist social relations or significantly soften their impact. Reaching a peak of 100,000 members in 1927 the ICU was to speedily decline, crumbling through internal dissention and organisational paralysis.[16]

Ostensibly a workers' organisation, because of the character and ambitions of its petty-bourgeois leadership, the

ICU tended to function as a mass-based political party, its charismatic leaders voicing a broad range of popular grievances. Incapable of organising systematically on an industrial base it nevertheless attracted and possibly diverted from Congress massive support - indicative of considerable receptiveness among the urban and rural poor to political ideas. In doing so it freed Congress's elitist leadership from the radicalising pressures emanating from below which had helped to condition its responses at the beginning of the decade. The ICU had a second, more positive effect on Congress. Its spokesmen infused into the courtly and often pompous discourse of African politicians a fierce anger and apocalyptic imagery. Here, for example, is James Thaele, later a Congress leader in the Western Cape, writing in the ICU newspaper, The Workers' Herald, in 1923:

> We are fed up with the white man's camouflage, his hypocrisy, his policy of pinpricks in the land of our forefathers. I am appealing to the racial consciousness of the radical aboriginal to use all means to rouse the African race to wake from their long sleep of many a decade . . . When those in authority became so unreasonably notorious . . . disregard that authority, be blind and damn the consequences. 17

Such sentiments were beginning to resonate among sections of the African National Congress (the title adopted by the SANNC in 1923) amid increasing disenchantment with negotiation and moderation in the face of an unprecedently repressive administration. For by 1926 there was additional reason for bitterness. Two years earlier there had been a realignment in white politics. With the accession of the Labour/Nationalist regime under General Hertzog, an administration more disposed to white rural and labour aristocracy interests had come to

power. It was less inclined to favour co-optive strategems with regard to blacks than its predecessor and readier to embrace the full political and economic implications of segregation. In 1926, two bills, one removing from Africans the common roll vote in the Cape and the other expanding on the provisions of the 1913 Land Act, were tabled. Though they were not passed for another decade the implication for African political leadership was clear: existing rights and privileges were from then under constant threat.

Before looking at how the ANC was behaving in the late 1920s we need to understand something of another radicalising influence, the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA). The Communist Party had been founded in 1921 after a series of discussions between tiny left-wing groups on the Rand and in Cape Town.[19] The CPSA was not a large body but it was well organised. A few of its members had been involved in earlier syndicalist attempts to organise black workers and so though it did not have apparently any blacks in its original membership it may have had some informal following amongst black workers. The CPSA, though, was not a syndicalist organisation - it was a political party, prepared, because conditions were not yet ripe for revolution in South Africa, to work within and take advantage of existing political institutions. This was to cause some internal disagreement, as well as, later on, criticism from other left-wing parties. Though it could, on occasion, be accused of opportunistic expediency over the race issue, in general the CPSA adhered to the doctrine that working class unity transcended racial divisions. White working class consciousness as it developed would, the CPSA leadership assumed, ultimately

eschew racialism. In the short term therefore, Communists were active in the Rand mineworkers' revolt despite the explicit racialism of the mineworkers' leaders. Similarly it supported the Nationalist/Labour alliance in the 1924 election - but this was to lead to revaluation: the racist overtones of the campaign led the CPSA at its annual conference to conclude that 'our main revolutionary task is among the natives'.[20]

The ICU, gathering strength in the mid 1920s, was the obvious target for Party workers. It had a massive working class membership, and at that stage explicitly socialist goals. Communists joined the ICU and helped it by leaving the field open for ICU men to organise industrially. But by 1926 there were considerable tensions between the Communists and the ICU arising from both tactical and ideological differences. First of all the ICU was not functioning as a trade union organisation as the Communists understood the concept. Its membership was scattered and diffuse and tended to be concentrated among farm workers rather than the industrial workforce. Communists within the ICU tried to reorganise the movement into industrial branches based on individual concerns and this was sharply resented by ICU leaders. Secondly the ICU's founders tended to view achievement in middle class terms - status, wealth and individual power - and hence could with some justification be accused of using the organisation to enrich themselves. Kadalie viewed the struggle as being primarily political and because of this sought institutional respectability for his movement through affiliation with reformist European labour organisations. Kadalie understood social conflict in South Africa mainly in nationalist or colonial terms and did not share the Communist vision of a class struggle

complicated only by racist 'false consciousness'. These tensions eventually resulted in the expulsion of the Communists and a sharp turn to the right by the ICU as it withered and decayed. Rejected by the ICU, Communists established their own industrial unions and placed fresh emphasis on African recruitment into the Party. By 1928 three members of the Central Committee were black as were most of the CPSA's 1,750 members. Concurrent with the emphasis on African mobilisation was a re-assessment of policy towards the ANC, hitherto treated as a purely reactionary movement.[21]

By 1927 ANC leaders were increasingly disillusioned with the politics of diplomatic (and sometimes downright sycophantic) persuasion. Their susceptibility to more radical strategy was signified in an abortive scheme in 1926 for joint ICU/ANC demonstrations in protest against Hertzog's legislative proposals. In 1927, with the election of Josiah Gumede to the presidency, the ANC announced its intention to embark on a course of mass organisation involving the construction of branch memberships. The Western Cape was already the scene of an energetic recruitment campaign among farmworkers by two Communists working within Congress, Ndobe and Tonjeni.[22] Here, in contrast to the Transvaal, wage labour as opposed to labour tenancy predominated on farms.[23]

Josiah Gumede had been influenced in the early 1920s by the American negro doctrine of Garveyism - a separatist ideology based on race-pride and black exclusiveness. But Gumede, in 1927 President of the Natal wing of the ANC, was receptive to other influences as well; he accepted an invitation to attend a Communist-sponsored Conference of Oppressed Nationalities and later toured the USSR returning to South Africa much impressed

with what he had seen. At Brussels the Conference adopted a motion put forward by Gumede and his compatriot, James La Guma of the Cape Town branch of the CPSA, endorsing:

> . . . the right of self determination through the complete overthrow of capitalism and imperialist domination . . . the principle of Africa for the Africans . . . 24

Under pressure from its African and coloured members as well as from Comintern,[25] the CPSA in 1928 took an important step which laid the foundation for any alliance with African nationalist organisations. This was the adoption of a vaguely worded slogan defining the Party's goal as 'an independent native republic as a stage towards a workers' and peasants' republic'. This formulation begged obvious questions which were never satisfactorily answered. The slogan was to be short-lived but one of its most important premises would inform CPSA policy for a long time. This was that South Africa contained within itself a colonial situation and consequently socialism would be accomplished through two stages; first a nationalist democratic revolution, involving many issues over which it would be easy to cooperate with reformist African petty bourgeois organisations, and only then a socialist revolution.

The native republic slogan was produced at an opportune moment. First, it coincided with and complemented the impact of Garveyism on the ANC. Both Gumede and James Thaele, President of the Western Cape ANC, were influenced by Marcus Garvey's doctrines. The millenarian accent of Garveyism would have reverberated strongly in rural parts of the Cape where there was considerable unrest among farm workers and where the ANC had succeeded in building country branches. Secondly, 1929 was a

year of intensification of coercive measures against Africans. A bitter election was fought that year on 'native policy' as the result of the Pact government's inability to gain the required two-thirds majority to alter the franchise arrangements. The election was accompanied by a vigorous implementation of the pass controls. In response to this Communists established a League of African Rights which was intended to agitate for freedom of speech, education, the vote and abolition of the pass laws. Gumede supported the League on behalf of the ANC and was elected its president. But by late 1929 Gumede was almost totally isolated from his executive - the ANC failed to support the League's proposed mass demonstrations against the pass laws.

In April 1930, after he had addressed the ANC annual conference on the need to mount a massive campaign on the basis of the native republic slogan, Josiah Gumede was voted out of office. In his place was elected Pixley Ka Izaka Seme and with his ascendency the ANC shifted several degrees rightwards into almost total moribundancy. Meanwhile the Communist International, working on the assumption that 1930 marked a profound crisis for the capitalist world, called for the withdrawal of all Communist Parties from any association with reformist organisations. The League of African Rights collapsed. The CPSA, despite internal misgivings as to whether a revolutionary situation prevailed in South Africa, called for a general strike and launched itself on a confrontationist course which, though heroic, was to lead to the Party's decimation (with the assistance of internal purges) and the almost total destruction of its trade union organisation. The ANC and ICU's refusal to support the pass burning demonstrations organised by the Communists in November 1930 in Johannesburg

created a legacy of ill feeling between revolutionaries and nationalists. Within the Western Cape where the ANC had been most radicalised and closest to the Communists, Congress split as dissidents, increasingly distressed by the right-wing swing by Thaele, set up their own, short-lived, Independent ANC.

The 1930s was a decade when both the ANC and the CPSA reached the nadir of their influence. The Communists, from being the best organised and most militant group active among black South Africans, were to lose much of their popular following. This was partly a consequence of the systematic policy of harrassment pursued by the state, and particularly the Minister of Justice, Oswald Pirow, but the decline in the fortunes of the CPSA was not simply the effect of more energetic repression. From 1933, with the ascendency of Nazism in Germany, Communist parties throughout the world, in conformity with Comintern advice, formed 'popular front' alliances with reformist anti-fascist groups. In South Africa, confronted with the attempts by Afrikaner nationalists to capture the white labour movement, Communists from the mid-thirties concentrated on combating what they perceived to be fascist tendencies in white workers. An all-white 'People's Front' was established and tacit support was offered to the Labour Party. Party newspapers carried less African news, and according to the memories of some of its African members, increasingly they felt that with the CPSA's strivings for a particular type of acceptability it was no longer <u>their</u> party. Revival was to come only slowly with the transfer of the Party's headquarters to Cape Town in 1937 and its reintegration into the Cape radical tradition which had begun amongst African and coloured workers a decade earlier.[26]

Meanwhile an ever-shrinking Congress floundered its way through the decade. Under the leadership of Pixley Ka Izaka Seme tensions between different leadership cliques increased and Congress's popular impact dwindled. Seme's philosophy and the reason for the ANC's decline are apparent in this extract from an article written by him in 1932:

> I wish to urge our educated young men and women not to lose contact with your own chiefs. You should make your chiefs and your tribal councils feel that education is a really good thing. It does not spoil people nor detribalise them. Most of the miseries which our people suffer in the towns and country today is due to this one factor, no confidence between the educated classes and their own uneducated people. The former cannot open any business relations amongst the latter and get good support because to be able to establish a business anywhere you want confidence. The Indian trader succeeds because he makes friends with all classes and ever tries to win their confidence. You should try and do likewise. . . . Congress can make us learn how to produce our own wants as a nation. We can learn to grow cotton and wool and make our own leather boots and blankets in our factories . . . 27

As well as reflecting the increasing difficulty the ANC was having in maintaining the allegiance of a chieftaincy ever more dependent for its position on the good will of the authorities, the economic message in the speech is also revealing. With its narodnik evocation of small self sufficient rurally based industrial communities the general good is identified totally with the welfare of an aspirant African commercial class. Translated into practical terms, Seme's policies included the wooing of chiefs[28] and the establishment of African Congress Clubs, which would function as savings organisations with the capacity to make loans to and provide cheap wholesale goods for

businessmen. To ensure their smooth operation ex-employees of the Native Affairs Department would handle Congress Club revenues.

Even the eventual passage of the Hertzog legislation in 1936, which removed Africans from the common roll, created for them a new set of segregated political institutions, including white 'Native Representatives' in Parliament and an elected advisory 'Native Representative Council', as well as entrenching the unequal distribution of land, did not provoke a dramatic response from African politicians. True, after a conference in Bloemfontein, a new organisation was established, the All African Convention, with the original purpose of uniting opposition to the legislation, but in the face of reluctance of establishment politicians to boycott the new institutions (a move which was urged by left-wingers from Cape Town) the All African Convention and its constituent organisations settled down into a familiar routine: wordy protests through consultative machinery, delegations, vague calls for African unity, and national days of prayer. The AAC was to be dominated until the war by conservatives; its protestations were to be punctuated by affirmations of loyalty to South Africa and the Crown, and its policy documents, despite some attention to general socio-economic matters, were largely thought out within the tenets of Cape liberalism.[29]

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In contrast to the political lethargy of the previous decade the 1940s was a period of ferment as political movements adjusted to the new pressures and opportunities created by popular

upheavals accompanying the massive wartime expansion of the African working class. Here we will focus mainly on Johannesburg, for there the developments within African urban communities assumed their most complex and dramatic form. Let us start by examining some of the socio-economic characteristics of South African urban society during these years.

The disruption of the international capitalist economy as a result of the second world war created boom conditions for South African industry with the proliferation of more sophisticated import substitution and the development of production geared to military requirements. There was a rapid growth in the number of African manufacturing workers as a consequence. Between 1939 and 1952 the African urban population nearly doubled mainly as a result of the movement of whole families from the countryside into the towns. The two most important impulses to this migration were the threat of starvation in the reserves and deteriorating conditions on white farms. In the reserves overcrowding led to a situation which for many was precarious even in years of good climatic conditions. For example, in 1943 a government commission found in the Transkei that nearly ten per cent of the households within the territory were landless, and in three typical districts half the population had no cattle.[30] In any case the war years were years of drought: in 1942, for example, the crop harvest in the Transkei was one quarter of its normal size.[31] On the farms the general trend towards proletarianisation of labour tenants and squatters continued, forcing large numbers off the land. The process was accelerated during the war years as a reflection of high food prices.[32]

This rural exodus was at first facilitated by a brief

suspension between 1942 and 1943 of urban influx control. This was one of several measures taken by the authorities to avoid confrontation and maintain African political quiescence. Others included school feeding schemes, pensions for certain categories of African employees and increased educational expenditure. All these tied in with manufacturing's requirement of a stable, urbanised, and relatively well-educated industrial labour force.

Urban African poverty, though not as atrocious as in the countryside, was nevertheless very widespread. The effects of rising wages were offset by unemployment and increases in the cost of staple foods and fuel.[33] Unskilled workers particularly rarely earned enough to cover the cost of essential food, shelter, fuel and clothing. As a consequence many people who depended on such wages simply did not survive: for example, in East London, six out of every ten African babies born were dead by the end of their first year.[34]

Such conditions were not always accepted passively. Where there was scope for leverage African communities were swift to attempt to resist increased subsistence costs or to reduce the price of survival. The two most important of such struggles were the Alexandra bus boycotts of 1940 to 1945 and the Johannesburg squatters' movement of 1944 to 1947.[35]

Alexandra was one of the few areas in which Africans could enjoy freehold property rights. It lay twelve miles to the north of Johannesburg, just outside the municipal boundary. It was lightly administered because of its freehold status and autonomy from Johannesburg and was consequently a catchment area for those people who had no official sanction to live in a town. It had other attractions for the least privileged: the absence of

effective building controls meant that landlords could erect shacks round their stands making accommodation available for people who for economic or bureaucratic reasons could not find housing in municipal townships. Like the other freehold suburb of Johannesburg, Sophiatown, Alexandra's population had a relatively complex class structure, as access to property rights had enabled the development of African business interests. From 1940 Alexandra appeared to be threatened with expropriation as white residents of encroaching suburbs who were opposed to its existence managed to obtain an increasingly sympathetic hearing from the civic authorities. This background of insecurity was an important element in communal responses.

Transport was an obviously sensitive issue in Alexandra. There were no trains and its distance from the city centre made the existence of a cheap bus service vital to the continued life of the township. African entrepreneurs had initially been able to exploit the demand for cheap transport but in the early 1940s the last of these, R. G. Baloyi, was squeezed out by better capitalised white-owned operations. The insecurity of African property owners and their continuing entrepreneurial aspirations in the transport field motivated them to play a leading role in the bus boycotts, though not always very successfully.

The first boycott occurred in 1940 nine months after the fare to town had been raised from 4d. to 5d. The boycott only took place after the failure of negotiations between operators, the Council and a Transport Action Committee, which included C. S. Ramahanoe, an Alexandra resident and Transvaal secretary of the ANC, and Gaur Radebe, also of Alexandra and a Congress as well as a Communist Party member. The boycott was brief,

successful, and because it was scarcely reported in the press little is known of the form it took.

In 1942 after a second attempt to raise the fare the buses were boycotted again, and on this occasion the boycott was enforced through pickets and its conduct was decided through a mass meeting in one of Alexandra's three public squares. On this occasion it was at first the fares which were boycotted rather than the buses, passengers simply refusing to pay the extra penny. The owners retaliated by moving the terminal to the edge of the township, hence shortening the route. Pickets were then set up which clashed with bus company employees and after negotiations between the company and a committee representing the ANC, Alexandra washerwomen and other special interests the old fare was restored while an official investigation was held.

The investigation favoured the bus companies and in August 1943, once again, fares were raised to 5d. This time the boycott was longer and attracted much more external attention, lasting from August 2nd to the 11th. The boycotters, 20,000 of them, walked to work across Johannesburg's north western suburbs. To assist these people an Emergency Transport Committee was formed composed of members of the Communist Party, white left-wingers and liberals and various Alexandra notables. Led by Senator Hyman Basner (a native representative and a former Communist) the committee organised lifts. This was done with the cooperation of the police and the traffic department and the Department of Native Affairs went so far as to appeal to employers to reinstate workers dismissed for lateness and absenteeism. In this boycott the ANC seems to have played an unimportant role in the day-to-day

leadership. In Alexandra Congress tended to be identified with Baloyi who was rightly suspected of self interested motives and neither he nor Xuma, the President General, were at their best on a public platform. Negotiations faltered and were ended by Government intervention after a dramatic procession of 10,000 Alexandra residents marched through the town on August 10th. A Commission of Enquiry was set up and for the time being the 4d. fare maintained.

Between 1943 and 1944 there seems to have been a significant shift in Government policy: whereas in 1943 the State appears to have played a conciliatory and defusing role, in 1944 official attitudes were more combative. It is possible this alteration was inspired by the self confidence engendered from Allied war victories. Despite commission evidence which suggested that no urban African community on the Rand could afford increased transport costs Government assent was given in November 1944 to the fivepenny fare. This time the boycott lasted seven weeks despite considerable state harassment: liftgivers were intimidated by officials, pass offenders were arrested in large numbers and a proclamation banned meetings or processions of over twenty people. There were attempts to extend the boycott geographically and there was even talk of a communal strike. The complexities of the various responses by the Government, Municipality and employers' organisations need not detain us here: eventually a subsidised coupon scheme was improvised in which people would buy tickets in advance for the old fare and the companies would claim the extra penny from the Council. This would be a temporary arrangement during which the bus companies were bought out by a Public Utility Corporation which

through economies of scale would retain the old fares. The conclusion of this final boycott found the leadership which had emerged in these struggles in disarray. In 1943 Basner, together with various African leaders disenchanted with the inability of Congress to function at a popular level, had formed an African Democratic Party. This fell apart in the 1944 boycott over disagreements between its more radical African members (who included Trotskyites) and the Senator on the acceptability of the coupon scheme. The scheme as it appeared in December 1944 was a temporary and uncertain measure, Basner himself only favouring it because of his scepticism as to whether the boycott would hold after its introduction. The Communists involved in the Workers' Transport Action Committee had fallen out with their colleagues after opposing the extension of the boycott to other centres. In any case, after the entry of Russia into the war, the Communist Party was, for its duration, unwilling to undertake illegal forms of opposition. The ANC establishment was totally discredited in the eyes of the boycotters: its leaders had avoided involvement and in the case of Ramahanoe, was tainted with employment with one of the bus companies. During the boycott itself different approaches had emerged between the Communists and the far left, the former arguing for the ending of the struggle as soon as a concession on fares had been offered, the latter advocating continuation until the State or the Municipality took over responsibility for the provision of public transport to Alexandra.[36] We will return to these political tensions. Apart from their influence on the politics of opposition the boycotts were important in demonstrating the effectiveness of a new tactic which was to be employed

repeatedly in the succeeding decade. They also served to promote a trend towards increasing state intervention in worker subsistence issues: the form this took in the case of Alexandra's transport was modest - the subsidisation (from a levy exerted on employers) of the monopolistic Public Utility Corporation. In the case of the squatters' movements described below state response was to be rather more extensive.

In 1944 there were four municipal housing schemes in Johannesburg: Western Native Township, adjacent to the freehold area of Sophiatown, Eastern Native Township, and much further from the centre of town, Orlando and Pimville. Orlando was the prototype for today's Soweto housing estate, and spartan and bleak as its accommodation was, Orlando was considered a 'model' township by the City fathers, though as much for the ease of administering it as the quality of its facilities. Pimville, on the other hand, was conceded to be a horrible place, consisting of 99 former water tanks sliced lengthwise each housing a family, and a rather larger group of African-constructed shanties. It had been conceived originally as an emergency camp for refugees from an inner city plague outbreak and had remained as a result of civic reluctance to provide alternative housing for its inhabitants. In total there were about 14,000 houses in these townships, most of them two-roomed. Under the impact of the wartime population increase these steadily became more overcrowded. An insignificant number of houses were built during the war: skilled labour shortages and the meanness of a ratepayer-controlled Council contributed to this failure. Instead regulations governing subtenancies were relaxed. By 1944 a two-roomed Orlando house normally accommodated eight people.

The housing shortage and consequent overcrowding was only one of several factors underlying the sudden emergence of squatter communities on the outskirts of Johannesburg which ultimately were to number more than 90,000 inhabitants. With unskilled workers earning about £5 a month and rent accounting for around a fifth of this, squatting could be a vital survival strategy; the most effective way of meeting the cost of subsistence with pauper level wages. Squatting could also be a resort of the unemployed, especially those who had left behind them the sheer hopelessness of a rural existence and arrived to form the most marginal and desperate portion of the urban population. But it seems that squatters were not characteristically unemployed and indeed their importance as part of an industrial labour force helped to protect them against municipal attempts to have them removed. Central government was to exhibit little enthusiasm in assisting local officialdom in its persecution of the squatters. The latter were housed at no cost to the state or industry. For the municipality though, the squatters represented a direct threat and challenge to its authority.

The squatters' movement began in March 1944 with the exodus of several hundred families of sub-tenants from Orlando to open land near the township where they built themselves shelter from sacking, scraps of wood and corrugated iron. This first camp had a structure which was to characterise those which followed it in the course of the next three years. It had a leader, James Mpanza, who controlled the camp through a tight organization which regulated entry into and membership of the squatter community, administered justice as well as its own authority through fines and beatings, exerted a levy on traders and with the funds deriving from membership fees, fines and trading levies, provided limited

facilities (especially water) and an income for Mpanza himself. This last function should not be exaggerated: squatter leaders were often accused by their opponents of gangster-style behaviour, but their subsequent careers demonstrated little evidence of great affluence. Power itself could have been an important attraction and motive for squatter leaders but there was also the vision of community development voiced by Oriel Monongoaha of Pimville, who, in 1947, demanded larger sites for rehoused squatters so they could keep livestock and vehicles, form transport cooperatives, finance 'Bursuries for Native children and students, and eventually contribute to the financial development of the African people as a whole'.[37]

The contest between the squatters' movements and the local authorities was, like the bus boycotts, too complex to do justice to in this introductory chapter. It ended in the destruction of the Johannesburg communities and their absorption into the massive complex of housing estates round Orlando that started to be built in the late 1940s. Mpanza today is referred to as 'the man who founded Soweto' and in this there is a measure of truth. The squatters, like the bus boycotters, were to help shape state policy in the direction of greater intervention and control over the housing and other basic requirements of the urban African workforce.

The relationship between squatters and political groups was an uneasy one. As far as the ANC was concerned, though the President-General, A. B. Xuma, spoke in 1947 in the Alexandra squatter camp[38] and the previous year the ANC's Youth League was reported to have assisted Mpanza's movement,[39] there is no evidence of any great interest in the squatters by the Congress leadership. This is not altogether surprising given the personalities concerned. Mpanza, a member of the Orlando

Advisory Board, and convicted once for murder, was much closer to the syncretic proletarian culture of the township than the urbane Congressmen. Converted to Christianity in prison he drew on his new faith to inspire his followers:

> The position of the chieftainship is given to me like Jesus. Many people thought I was arrested, and yet I was not. The same as with Jesus. Many thought he was dead, and yet he was not. 40

A good example of the gulf which existed between Mpanza and his followers on the one hand and the ANC leadership on the other was in an Advisory Board meeting debate over the issue of home brewing. P. Q. Vundla, of the ANC, arguing for the restriction of brewing, said:

> We hear much about Kaffer beer forming part of our 'native customs' but we do not want these 'native customs' because our township being part and parcel of the town we have to follow the white way of living.

Mpanza was forced to leave the meeting after 'daring those who opposed homebrewing to express their feelings at a public meeting . . . where they would certainly be stoned to death'. 'The African', he declared, 'when he supplicates his gods, slaughters a goat or a sheep, and brews his traditional beverage'.[41]

Until 1946, the Communists also held back from involvement in the squatters' cause despite initial overtures to them by Mpanza. The Johannesburg District Committee's annual report mentioned him as a 'figure hardly worth taking seriously', and by implication a 'cheap demagogue' 'Urging the people to irresponsible actions'. The report nonetheless conceded that Communist activity in the townships had been 'almost entirely propagandist' and that Mpanza 'gave the people what they demanded;

something to do about the housing shortage'.[42] It was to take nearly two years for the Communist Party to reassess the squatters' movement. The impetus to do so may have come from two sources. First, in late 1946, party members in Alexandra helped to lead a squatters' movement.[43] Secondly, a rent strike in Moroka, the camp established by the Council to house and control squatters, gained the active support of Councillor Hilda Watts, the first Communist elected to Johannesburg's city council. The Communists in 1947 formed a squatters' Coordinating Committee which drew in some of the squatters' leaders. Under the secretaryship of Edwin Mofutsanyana, editor of the Communist Party newspaper, Inkululeko, this committee achieved little. Mofutsanyana himself had never demonstrated any interest in squatters before, despite living in Orlando, and moreover had opposed Mpanza in Advisory Board elections. But in any case by 1947 the squatters' movement was on the wane. Probably all along the Communist Party would have found it difficult to work with the squatters: communists disliked and distrusted spontaneous movements and the squatters' leaders jealously guarded the sphere of their authority. In 1945 and 1946 Communist preoccupations in Johannesburg were elsewhere: in the attempt to build an electoral pact with the Labour Party so as to influence more effectively white municipal voters, and with the trade union movement consolidated during the war.

Besides the popular (and in certain respects populist) subsistence movements, the squatters and the bus boycotts, the other spur which was to prod African political leadership in a more militant direction was provided by organised labour. The

wartime expansion of secondary industry was accompanied by a flurry of trade union activity among Africans. Because Africans were performing increasingly skilled functions in industry they were becoming less easy to replace and hence less vulnerable to dismissal. Between September 1942 and February 1943 worker exasperation at the falling value of their wages was manifested in a sudden rash of strikes on the Witwatersrand; thereafter, despite being proclaimed illegal, sixty strikes erupted before the end of 1944. Frequently these strikes were independent of trade union initiatives; indeed unions under Communist direction tended to be restrained by the Party's reluctance to disrupt production after the Soviet entry into the war. This notwithstanding, African unions, through winning substantial improvements for their members at a time when many employers were beginning to favour their activities as a favourable alternative to industrial anarchy, steadily increased their strength. At the end of 1942, the Minister of Labour, Walter Madeley, even went so far as to discuss the possibility of African trade union recognition. The relatively conciliatory official attitude to African labour during the war was reflected in the rush of minimum wage determinations; by the war's end the number of African workers covered by these had increased sixty-fold.[44]

On the Rand the most important African unions were from the end of 1941 affiliated to the Communist-influenced Council for Non-European Trades Unions (CNETU). CNETU was to develop into the most powerful African trade union grouping ever to have existed in South Africa with, by 1945, a claimed affiliate strength of 158,000 members. Its 119 affiliate unions

represented forty per cent of African employment in commerce and manufacture. During the war African labour had reached a position of considerable bargaining power yet for political reasons CNETU was unwilling to challenge either the state or employers on the crucial question of recognition, doing so only in 1946 with the mineworkers strike when CNETU no longer had the strategic advantage.

African trade unions provided a significant radicalising influence on the ANC, especially in the Eastern Cape. As far as the ANC leadership in Johannesburg was concerned, the workers' struggle which was to make the deepest impression on their outlook was that of the African mineworkers.[45] African mineworkers were very difficult to organise. A contract labour system, a migrant workforce, and their housing in tightly controlled compounds all presented obstacles in the creation of durable trade unions. Wages as a result of monopsonic recruiting were low - in 1942 less than what they were in 1890. The Chamber of Mines justified low wages with the increasingly untenable assertion that migrant workers could supplement their renumeration through their families' agricultural activity in the reserves. Fixed gold prices and high capital outlay in the industry served as further rationalisations for its low wage structure.

From 1930 the material position of mineworkers deteriorated. They tended to be drawn from the landless portion of the reserve population and hence the section most effected by fluctuating food prices. In the 1940s the cost of food was rising sharply. In 1941, on the initiative of two Communists within the ANC

leadership, Gaur Radebe and Edwin Mofutsanyana, a conference was held under Congress auspices to discuss the formation of a mineworkers' trade union. Present at the conference was a representative of the Native Mine Clerks' Association. The mine clerks were not subject to the same restrictions and hardships as surface and underground workers but because of their employment within the mining industry they had been excluded from the cost of living allowance and this motivated them to affiliate to the African Mineworkers' Union (AMU). As union officials were to be prohibited from entering the compounds the mine clerks with their access to the workforce were to play an important organisational role.

In early 1943 after sporadic strikes the government appointed a commission to investigate mineworkers' wages and conditions. The Commission's recommendations which included modest wage increases for the lowest paid and some form of 'collective bargaining' system did not go far towards meeting the AMU demands (regular wage increases, union recognition, and the abolition of the compound system). The Chamber of Mines granted a small wage increase below the level recommended by the Commission. Meanwhile, despite harassment of its officials, the AMU grew, claiming in 1944 25,000 members. In 1945 post-war food shortages led to a decline in the quality of rations; with the substitution of canned for fresh meat riots broke out on many mines.

In April 1946 the AMU resolved to claim a minimum wage of ten shillings a day, family housing, paid leave and various other improvements. In May in the wake of wild cat stoppages in support of the minimum wage demand a meeting held on the 19th

attended by 2,000 miners voted in favour of a general strike if their demands were not met. Subsequently an organising committee was formed by union officials and the Johannesburg District Committee of the Communist Party. In June the CNETU pledged itself to give full support.

On the morning of August 12th between 60,000 and 70,000 miners refused to go on shift in at least twelve mines. The next day CNETU called for a general strike in sympathy. The miners held out for a week despite ruthless state response. Affected compounds were surrounded by police and the AMU leaders were arrested. A sit-down strike at the rockface was broken very brutally, the miners being driven up onto the surface and back into the compound. Mineworkers who marched from the East Rand compounds to the Chief Native Commissioners' Office in Johannesburg were savagely repulsed by the police. The strike was ferociously suppressed at a cost of 12 dead and 1,200 wounded. CNETU's efforts to mount a sympathy strike were thwarted by a massive police presence in townships at stations and bus terminals.

The strike effectively destroyed the AMU and weakened CNETU. In 1947 twenty-two African affiliates were to secede from the Council citing as their reasons disenchantment with Communist leadership and disillusion with the strike weapon.[46] It also signalled the end of any serious consideration of Government reformist proposals by African political leaders. In the course of the strike the Native Representative Council was adjourned at the insistence of its African members, some of whom had conferred with miners while changing trains in Germiston on their way to Pretoria. The adjournment was an important moment in the

realignment of African politics which took place in the 1940s and it is to this that we now turn.

The two most important developments in African politics during the 1940s were the emergence of the Congress Youth League and the consolidation of its influence on the ANC leadership and the strengthening of the relationship between Congress and the Communist Party.

In April 1944 after a series of meetings and discussions between young ANC members and the ANC leadership a Youth League was formally constituted. Membership was to be open to all Africans (and those from other communities 'who live like and with Africans') between the ages of twelve and forty.[47] Youth League members over the age of 17 automatically became members of the ANC. After asserting that 'no nation can free an oppressed group other than that group itself'[48] the League's manifesto went on to make some fairly pungent criticisms of the ANC. The ANC, it argued, with its habit of yielding to oppression was unable to advance the cause of African freedom. It was weakly organised, represented only the most privileged members of the African community and hence was concerned mainly with the preservation of rights enjoyed only by an elite. Its thinking lacked 'national feeling'[49] and its strategy was an overwhelmingly negative one of reaction. The Congress Youth League's purpose would be to infuse into the national liberation movement 'the spirit of African Nationalism' and act as the 'brains trust' of the ANC.[50] The manifesto went on to outline the Congress Youth League (CYL) 'Creed'. This included a belief in 'the divine destiny of nations',[51] a rejection of 'foreign leadership', the insistence that leadership should symbolize

'popular aspirations and ideals',[52] and the unity of all Africans from the Mediterranean to the Indian and Atlantic oceans - 'Africa must speak with one voice.'[53]

The guiding personality behind the League's inception was a former schoolteacher and articled clerk, Anton Muziwakhe Lembede. Lembede was born in 1914, the son of a Zulu farm labourer. Educated at home by his mother he succeeded in winning a bursary to Adams teacher training college near Durban. In the late 1930s he taught in the Orange Free State while taking correspondence BA and LLB degrees through the University of South Africa. In 1943, having given up his teaching post, he arrived in Johannesburg to work in the legal office of Pixley Ka Izaka Seme. Lembede's intellectual gifts, which were formidable, were developed in a very different context from the environment in which the ANC establishment had been brought up. He was self-educated to a large degree and had never lived or worked abroad. His origins lay in an impoverished peasantry. His period in the Free State had made him a fluent Afrikaans speaker. Contributing to his heightened sense of race-consciousness was the developing assertion of Afrikaner nationalism. This, together with the rise of European fascism, helped to shape Lembede's developing political views. He was a devout Roman Catholic and in 1945 wrote an MA philosophy dissertation for Unisa entitled 'The Conception of God, as expounded by, and as it emerges from the writings of philosophers from Descartes to the present day'.

Lembede and his co-founders of the Youth League were inspired by the popular responses to material deprivation which we have just been examining in wartime Johannesburg. Here, for the Youth

Leaguers, was the potential source of mass support which the ANC had so shamefully neglected to exploit. But to link this rapidly swelling urban proletariat to Congress a crucial problem had to be overcome. With all the puritanism of a recent rural arrival in the corrupt urban milieu of Johannesburg, Lembede was to write in 1946:

> Moral degradation is assuming alarming proportions . . . (and) manifests itself in such abnormal and pathological phenomena as a loss of self confidence, inferiority complex, a feeling of frustration, the worship and idolisation of whiteness, foreign leaders and ideologies. All these are symptoms of a pathological state of mind. 54

What was required to channel the latent energy of working class Africans in the direction of Congress was an appeal that would overcome the psychological inhibitions produced by racial oppression. This appeal should consist of a racially assertive nationalism which would serve to nurture sentiments which were part of the 'natural' psychological constitution of all Africans.

The Youth League would therefore place its emphasis on indigenous leadership and national self determination. 'The leaders of the Africans must come out of their own loins' and 'Africa is a Black man's country'. Political collaboration with other groups could take place only with Africans acting as 'an organised self-conscious unit'. In particular, the Youth Leaguers were wary of the Left. Quite apart from the suspicion that communism simply served to cloak another varient of white paternalism, there was the gulf between a class-based analysis and one which made ethnicity the vital determinant: 'Africans are a conquered race - they do not suffer class oppression - they are oppressed as a group, as a nation'.

There was little philosophically original about the Youth League's 'Africanism', as it came to be known. It drew extensively on nineteenth century Romanticism and Social Darwinism. In any case many of Lembede's disciples were not particularly interested in his theories about racial destiny. Where Africanism had a lasting impact was in the sphere of strategy. Its exponents, while they may not have been profound political theorists, seem to have been unusually imaginative in their reactions to the social eruptions around them. Alone among political groupings they attempted to involve themselves in Mpanza's movement (the ANC preferred to negotiate on behalf of the Orlando squatters with the City Council but with no popular mandate to do this while the Communists regarded the squatters as irresponsible[55]). In a revealing speech in 1949 a Youth Leaguer informed his audience of Kroonstadt teachers:

> A significant thing has happened recently. In the tram boycott of Western Native Township the lead has been taken by African youth who in their enthusiasm even use violence to make this a success . . . These (sic) are manifestations of the new spirit of nationalism. Only these youngsters haven't the correct orientation. The spirit is there and undeniable. 56

It was this recognition of the political opportunity presented by these spontaneous popular outbursts that was the most important contribution made by the Africanists. From such struggles they distilled a strategy of mass action, centred on the use of the boycott weapon (which had been employed with such effect in the economic context of the bus disputes in Alexandra) but involving also strikes, civil disobedience and non-cooperation. Africanists were never to produce any clear conception of exactly how and in what order these tactics should be employed to

achieve their goal of 'national freedom'. Rather they assumed that in the course of an almost mystical communion between leaders and the popular classes the path would become clear:

> Every Youth Leaguer must go down to the masses. Brush aside all liberals - both white and black. No compromise is our motto. We recognise only one authority - the people, and our leader can only be he, who is with the people. 57

To understand why the Africanist vision was to become so influential within African politics in the late 1940s we need to look at the overall political environment of the 1940s. Whatever hopes and aspirations had been raised by early wartime hints and promises of reform made by the Smuts administration were to be disappointed later in the decade. Not that they were based altogether on false premises. The shifts in Government policy towards certain classes within the African community were not the result of mere political expediency but reflected important social divisions within white society. Collective bargaining rights for African workers, social welfare provisions and educational improvements, a degree of material security and legal recognition of their permanent status for African town-dwellers were all concessions which the increasingly powerful manufacturing interest viewed as being to its long term benefit. These were all under consideration by Government commissions in the second half of the 1940s. On the other hand there were powerful groups opposed to any improvement in the material conditions, rights and status of the urban African population: farmers suffering from a shortage of labour as the result of the exodus from the countryside to the cities; white workers fearful of the erosions an organised black working class could make on

their preserves of skills and protected employment. For the first time in South African history the proportional wage differentiation between black and white workers was narrowing and nascent Afrikaner capitalists were unable to afford the concessions being contemplated by established industrial and commercial employers.

It was these groups which threw their weight behind the Nationalist Party with its advocacy of an intensification of political and social racial segregation, an increased degree of coercion of black workers, and the retention, elaboration and sophistication of the migrant labour system in the interests of a more rational allocation of labour between different sectors of employment.[58] In 1948 to the surprise of the incumbent administration the Nationalists were voted into power. Were any further proof needed of the futility of traditional ANC lobbying tactics the Nationalists were ready to supply it; unlike their predecessors they had not at that stage the slightest motivation to meet the most sectional African aspirations. But in any case by then even the most conservative African politicians had little faith in the capacity of any white administration for more than token reforms. Notwithstanding the limited integrationist proposals of some United Party spokesmen, the brutal treatment of the mineworkers, the extension of urban influx controls in the Cape, the creation of segregated political institutions for Coloureds and Indians and the demonstrable uselessness of the Native Representative Council had all served to undermine any residual faith in the tactics of persuasion through deputation, memoranda and negotiation via sympathetic intermediaries. The Africanist

emphasis on confrontation accorded well with the political climate of the decade.

African political expectations were also heightened by the international political context. In common with nationalists in other parts of Africa and Asia, black South African politicians were to interpret rather more literally the Atlantic Charter's endorsement of self-determination than its authors in the Allied camp intended particularly as it was enthusiastically supported by Field Marshal Smuts. In 1943 a committee of leading professionals, educationists, ANC and Communist Party members produced a document called 'African claims in South Africa'. Calling in its preamble for the application of the Atlantic Charter to all parts of the British Empire it went on to outline a Bill of Rights. This included provisions for the abolition of all political discrimination based on race and the extension to all adults of voting rights, freedom of residence and of movement, equal rights in the spheres of property and occupation, equal pay for equal work, free compulsory education, equal state assistance to African farmers and the universal extension of a variety of welfare services and social security measures. The proposals provide an interesting contrast to the economic self help philosophy of Seme one decade earlier and the importance attributed to the role of the state was itself a reflection of the slightly more enlightened way the state was responding to urban African needs in the early 1940s. 'African Claims' was summarily rejected by Smuts when it was presented to him in 1944. But as well as its importance as a stage towards the development of a coherent social alternative to the status quo by the nationalist movement the document was symptomatic of

an increased interest by educated Africans in the international environment. For there, as never before, there was plenty to excite them. Quite apart from the stunning defeat of a European empire by an Asiatic power there was the gathering strength of an anti-colonial movement in India and, from 1945, an international forum in the United Nations which would listen with some sympathy and interest to their representatives.

Inducing middle class Africans towards a more aggressive political outlook were economic factors which, in some cases, they were less well placed to respond to than sections of the industrial workforce. Teachers and clerical workers occupy less strategically advantageous positions than semi-skilled industrial workers at a time of inflation, and the mid-1940s witnessed an extraordinary degree of open disaffection by African teachers in their angry but vain campaigning for improved conditions and wages.[59] Teachers were, incidentally, to form a disproportionately large group within the CYL's early membership. Even the relatively privileged position of someone like the ANC Treasurer General, R. G. Baloyi, was not without general significance. His original business was built on African transport, on linking Alexandra's commuters with the workplace and Johannesburg with its rural hinterland. By 1940, legislation designed to entrench the position of South African Railways and competition from recently arrived Afrikaner and Italian migrants to Johannesburg forced Baloyi and other African entrepreneurs out of the black transport business. In the 1940s with the gathering force of the attack by local white interests on African freehold in those citadels of African entrepreneurial interests, Sophiatown and Alexandra, petty bourgeois Africans were confronted with fresh threats to their security.

Even before the birth of the Youth League there were indications within Congress of a more vigorous reaction to the new pressures and challenges created by a rapidly industrialising society. In 1940 the ANC elected as its president A. B. Xuma. Then aged forty-seven, Xuma was a comparatively young man to accede to this position. Up until that time he had not been very active in politics though he had helped to organise the first meeting of the All African Convention of which he was a vice-president. His distinction was due rather to his impressive professional achievements. After a brief spell as a primary school teacher he had trained for fourteen years, mainly at American universities but also in Hungary and Britain, before starting a medical practice in Johannesburg in 1928. Xuma was an energetic and intellectually attractive man, though in manner aloof and authoritarian. His major political achievement was to streamline the ANC's organisation. He did this through drawing up a new constitution in 1943 which scrapped ex-officio chiefly membership and abolished Congress's 'House of Chiefs' envisaged in the 1912 constitution, gave full equality to women members, centralised authority with the creation of a working committee of five executive members who lived within fifty miles of the president, and through allowing local retention of a portion of subscriptions, attempted to create an effective branch structure. Xuma himself was to pay the expenses of full-time organisers until Congress finances were on a sound footing, something which was briefly achieved in the late 1940s. An attempt was made, with some effect in Natal, to build up rural branches, and in the Transvaal, urban branches began holding regular weekend open air meetings. By 1947 membership had reached a peak for the decade of 5,517, over half

of which was in the Transvaal. In addition, through its mass meetings in locations often attended by thousands of people, Congress had generated a much larger less committed informal following.[60]

Xuma's talents did not include a popular touch: he was no orator and preferred the atmosphere of the committee room to that of the mass meeting. It was an indication of his imaginativeness that he was initially receptive towards the young men who brought to him the proposal to establish a Youth League. There is an interesting record of his response to the draft manifesto:

> . . . the deputation went on to say that the erratic policy of the ANC was shown by the fact there was no programme of action - no passive resistance or some such action. Dr. Xuma replied that the Africans as a group were unorganised and undisciplined, and that a programme of action such as envisaged by the Youth League would be rash at this stage. The ANC lacked people who were concerned about the movement and knew what they wanted. Action would merely lead to exposure. The masses of the people were unorganised and only committees existed in the ANC. . . . His own feeling was that some members of the Youth League should be on the executive of the ANC. . . . He felt that what was really wrong with the manifesto was the tone of the criticism and the expressions used. The Committee should start off without antagonising anyone. 61

The men of the Youth League were precisely the kind whom Xuma was attempting to bring into the organisation: creative, committed, well-qualified young professionals. At the same time, the exchange indicated what was to persist as the main issue of contention between Xuma and the League: the question of organisation. The Africanists were uninterested in organisational problems - the League itself was to remain small and loosely structured - for them the key question was ideological orientation.

Xuma was to insist that organisational preparation was a vital pre-requisite to any form of mass campaigning and this was to lead him to oppose the Youth League's attempts in the late 1940s to persuade the ANC to boycott advisory board and native representative elections. Xuma's predilection for organisation and his pragmatic approach to doctrinal issues are useful in understanding his willingness to form alliances with both the Communist Party (with which he was in considerable tactical agreement) and in 1947 (possibly with an eye on the international gallery) the Indian Congresses in their campaign of passive resistance against the Asiatic Land Tenure and Representation Act. Xuma's support for the latter never got beyond a joint statement of principles but in the case of the Communists, in reaction to the sudden intensification of pass law prosecutions he agreed in 1943 to chair a joint CPSA/ANC Anti-Pass Committee. The Anti-Pass campaign, though expected to culminate in a general strike and pass burnings, was a premature gesture: neither the ANC nor the Communist Party could muster much enthusiastic support and Xuma's participation was essentially rhetorical and half-hearted. The Africanists were hostile, disliking the degree of Communist and Indian participation in the leadership. Africanists, by 1947, well represented on the ANC National Executive, combined with conservative Natal leaders in opposing effective cooperation in the Indian passive resistance campaign.[62]

The Indian passive resistance of 1946 to 1948, unsuccessful as it was in gaining the repeal of the offending legislation, was nevertheless important. It impressed on the ANC National Executive in 1949 the need to adopt rather more forceful tactics, particularly in the light of the 1948 election. Since Lembede's

death from an unknown illness in 1947 a document prepared by Africanists had been circulating at various levels of the Congress leadership. By 1949 this was in the hands of a drafting committee appointed by Dr. Xuma and drawn from the left, the establishment, and the Africanist sections of the ANC's leadership. At the 1949 annual conference the ANC committed itself to implementing the final formulation of this document, the Programme of Action. The Programme was the most militant statement of principles adopted by the ANC to date. Congress was called upon to struggle for the rights of national freedom, political independence, and self determination (these were not defined clearly) and the rejection of white leadership and all forms of segregation. The means employed to reach these ends should include: the creation of a national fund and a national press; the appointment of a Council of Action which would organise a boycott of all differential political institutions, plan a 'national stoppage of work in protest against the reactionary policy of the Government', and as well as boycotts and strikes employ the weapons of civil disobedience and non-cooperation; the expansion of African economic power through African-owned businesses, reserve development and trade unions; the improvement of African education through the creation of scholarship funds, trade union educational programmes and a 'National Centre of Education'; various cultural activities articulated through a 'National Academy of the Arts and the Sciences'. Finally Congress recognised 'that ultimately the people will be brought together by inspired leadership under the banner of African Nationalism'.[63] The Programme was the result of an eclectic set of influences: the reference to political

independence and self-determination being obviously Africanist-inspired; the strategic component derived from the experiences of the Indian Congress and the Communist Party as well as some of the popular struggles of the decade; and the self-help theme a throw-back to the economic nationalism of Congress in the 1930s. Simultaneously with its adoption the leadership changed hands; Dr. Xuma, with his distaste for mass-based political activism, being replaced by the Free State physician, Dr. James Moroka. As socially eminent as his medical colleague, Moroka had the additional advantage of being sympathetically inclined towards militant tactics. He was, however, politically inexperienced not actually being an ANC member at the time of his election and though personally courageous lacked the sophistication to hold together the increasingly complex organisation the ANC was shortly to become.

Joining Dr. Moroka on the new ANC national executive were some of the young men who were to predominate in African politics in the 1950s. Of the Youth Leaguers elected to leadership positions, Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo and Walter Sisulu would play the most prominent role in the events of the subsequent years. All three had originally come from the Transkei. While Tambo and Sisulu were born into fairly modest peasant households Nelson Mandela's origins were patrician; his family belonged to the Tembu Royal House. After high school and two years at Fort Hare university (he was expelled in the aftermath of a student protest) Mandela arrived in Johannesburg to study law, first by correspondence and then at the University of the Witwatersrand. He had been a foundation member of the League but not one of its main theorists despite his intellectual ability. In the events

which followed the ANC's adoption of the Programme of Action, Mandela would prove himself to be a pragmatic and astute strategist.

In 1949 like Mandela a law student, Oliver Tambo had also been expelled from Fort Hare after a student strike. He had then taught at St. Peter's, a prestigious African school in Johannesburg, where he was an inspirational influence on some of the students who were to assume leading positions in the ANC in the late 1950s. Tambo helped to found the Youth League and became its treasurer, though, as in the case of Mandela, he was never one of its principal ideologues. Less charismatic than his future legal partner (he and Mandela were to open an ill-fated legal practice in 1952) he was rather an austere figure, then a puritanical christian, characteristically silent and thoughtful.

Sisulu had a very different background. From a poor peasant household near Engcobo, before joining the ANC he had worked in a variety of labouring jobs in East London and Johannesburg, as well as a brief spell on the gold mines. The original sources of his political inspiration were in Xhosa oral traditions as well as the Wellington Buthelezi millenarian movement which had had its main following near his village while he was a boy. In 1940 he had tried to organise a bakery strike and in 1946 had been involved in CNETU's efforts to instigate a general strike in support of the mineworkers. Sisulu was in appearance a dour-looking figure: short, stocky, often hidden in the folds of a wide-lapelled overcoat, bespectacled and with a habit noticed by journalists of biting his bottom lip in between making terse polemical statements. Behind this guarded exterior

there was taking place a remarkable intellectual and emotional transformation, for Walter Sisulu, from being one of the most fervent exponents of racially exclusivist nationalism was one of the first former Youth Leaguers to advocate alliance with political groups drawn from other sections of the population. Sisulu was elected as Secretary-General of the ANC.

Though the Youth League, with six of its members on the ANC's executive and the adoption of its Programme of Action, could with justice represent the 1949 conference as a triumph for its guiding philosophy, nevertheless the ANC's leadership remained eclectic in its composition and ideology. The Communists were still represented and two of them, Moses Kotane and J. B. Marks, would remain influential throughout the 1950s. Both about twenty years older than the Youth Leaguers, both had been politically active since the 1920s, had received training at the Lenin School in Moscow, and unlike some African Communists had a long history of commitment and loyalty to the ANC. Of the two Marks was the better educated - he had worked for some time as a teacher - but Kotane, self taught and educated at a Communist Party nightschool, was of the two more at home with Marxist theory and more capable of independent thought. The two men were widely respected, even by Africanists, as political veterans, for their integrity and evident courage.

Finally there was also the traditional liberal African political leadership, after the 1949 executive elections most impressively in the dignified figure of Professor Z. K. Matthews. One of only two black professors in South Africa, Z. K. Matthews, the son of a Kimberley diamond miner and cafe owner, at the age of 50 epitomised the traditional African middle class ideal of

success. Gentle and apparently lethargic in manner, he was thought by some of the younger African politicians as being firmly in the ranks of old guard conservative leaders. In fact, Z. K. Matthews' aura of respectability and his natural conservatism were tempered by personal modesty and a sense of honour. Fastidiously courteous in all his dealings with the authorities, which until the advent of the Nationalists had frequently sought his advice and participation on official committees, he was nevertheless an uncompromising political leader. Together with his eldest son Joe, who joined the executive a few years later, he was to be one of the key intellectual influences on the ANC's evolution and in particular, in the preservation, alongside an apparently confrontationist strategy, of a conciliatory and racially inclusive ideal.[64]

Parallel to the development of a populist tendency within the ANC the Communist Party had been undergoing a gradual process of change of direction. At the beginning of the war after six years of popular front activity and with the adoption in conformity with the Soviet Union of an anti-war stance, its influence was at its nadir. Membership had sunk to 280, 150 of these in Johannesburg. In the following years it was to achieve a remarkable recovery, particularly with regard to its African membership. The outstanding feature of its development during the decade was an increaing involvement with the affairs of Congress.

During the war itself the extension of the Party's influence was chiefly through the indirect means of building industrial trade unions among African and Indian workers and, on the white political front, in municipal elections. The Party was assisted after 1941, with the entry of the USSR into the war and its

subsequent 'Defend South Africa Campaign', by a certain institutional respectability. Its press was allowed extra newsprint and the circulation of two communist controlled newspapers, Guardian and Inkululeko, soared to a weekly total of 67,000. During the war itself membership grew to nearly 2,400. This was first mainly due to trade union work which remained the chief source of the Party's strength amongst blacks in Durban and the Cape, though in the Transvaal, particularly in the East Rand, the party from about 1943 began to play quite a prominent role in township politics taking up basic bread and butter issues. On the East Rand, though not in Johannesburg where local leadership tended to be preoccupied with white municipal elections, the Communists managed to establish themselves a foothold on most of the Advisory Boards. In Johannesburg itself, through its success in winning a seat on the Johannesburg City Council, the local branch still cherished the illusion that it could increase its white working class following. The lack of any recent activism in local township politics was at the root of the failure of the Communist anti-pass campaign to generate any enduring support in its centre, Johannesburg.[65]

African members of the Communist Party as a result of the lack of interest the CPSA leadership showed in African political affairs in the 1930s and early 1940s had begun to work more energetically within the ranks of Congress. In certain instances there were tactical reasons for this: with its access to traditional leaders in the reserves[66] Congress would be useful in the organisation of mineworkers. In 1945 three leading African communists, Moses Kotane, J. B. Marks and Dan Thloome were on the ANC's national executive. These men influenced the

Party, in the post-war period of final disillusion with white labour, to promote causes which would appeal to a wide range of African opinion rather than just the working class: the pass laws and the franchise being at the centre of CPSA national campaigns after 1945. On the whole Communists enjoyed the support of the more conservatively inclined members of the ANC's leadership: in 1945 and 1947 the Africanists were narrowly defeated in their bids to have communists expelled from the ANC. At the 1947 ANC annual conference communists and the establishment joined forces in repudiating the Africanist policy of boycotting advisory board and native representative elections: both were agreed that these provided a useful platform which should not be yielded to political opponents.

In 1950 the CPSA's still predominantly white Central Committee in its annual report for 1949 discussed the problem of the Party's relationship with the nationalist movement. The report argued first that with the election of the Nationalist Party, South Africa was entering a period of bitter national conflict, in which, with the promotion of 'exclusive nationalist consciousness' by an intensified racial oppression, the objective reality of class divisions was hidden. In such circumstances the Party should be careful to avoid dogmatic hostility to nationalism. The report went on to argue the case for working with and through the national movement:

> From the analysis here presented, the conclusion must be drawn that the national movements can develop into powerful mass movements only to the extent that their contents and aims are determined by the interests of workers and peasants. The national organisations, to be effective, must be transformed into a revolutionary party of workers, peasants, intellectuals

> and petty bourgeoisie, linked together in a firm organisation, subject to a strict discipline, and guided by a definite programme of struggle against all forms of racial discrimination in alliance with class conscious European workers and intellectuals. Such a party would be distinguished from the Communist Party in that its objective is national liberation, that is the abolition of race discrimination, but it would cooperate closely with the Communist Party. In this party the class conscious workers and peasants of the national group concerned would constitute the main leadership. It would be their task to develop an adequate organisational apparatus, to conduct mass struggles against race discrimination, to combat chauvinism and racialism in the national movement, to develop class consciousness in the people, and to forge unity in action between the oppressed people and between them and the European working class. 67

With the development of this formulation Communists had finally recognised that the path to a socialist revolution lay through a nationalist struggle[68] and from 1950 the South African revolutionary left was to devote its energy to influencing the course of the 'national movement'. As we shall see, this was to give rise to bitter conflicts within the ANC.

Chapter One - Notes and References

1. Gwendoline Carter and Thomas Karis, From Protest to Challenge, Volume 1, Hoover, Stanford, 1971, p. 20.

2. See Sol Plaatje, Native Life in South Africa, Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1982.

3. E.g.:

> Our earning power is very small. I think when we are forced to work there ought to be big pay. There is no decent black man that can manage to exist on £8 a week, pay all the taxes, and the upkeep of his house in the proper manner - I mean a civilised native. I do not mean the raw man who comes from the kraals . . . now we are all blacks and measured with the same measure . . . I am measured with the same measure as the man who cannot look after himself and who is not in the same position as I am.
> (Testimony to the 1903 Native Laws Commission, Carter and Karis, op. cit.)
>
> Railway waiting rooms are made to accommodate the rawest blanketed heathen; and the more decent native has either to use them and annex vermin or to do without shelter imbibing wintry weather.
> (Professor Jabavu to Natal Mission Conference, 1920, Carter and Karis, op. cit., p. 118)

4. SANNC constitution, ibid., p. 78.

5. Ibid., p. 72.

6. Ibid., p. 78.

7. Peter Walshe, The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa, Hurst, London, 1970, p. 38.

8. Author's interview with Mr. William Letlalo, Soweto, 1979.

9. Brian Willan, 'From Tram Shed to Assembly Hall' in University of London, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Collected Seminar Papers on the Societies of Southern Africa, Volume 8, p. 8.

10. Philip Bonner, 'The Transvaal Native Congress, 1917-1920', University of the Witwatersrand African Studies Institute seminar paper, 1980, pp. 8-10.

11. Frederick Johnston, 'The IWA on the Rand' in Belinda Bozzoli (ed.), Labour, Townships and Protest, Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1979.

12. See Bonner, op. cit., and also Philip Bonner, 'The 1920 Black Mineworkers' Strike' in Bozzoli, op. cit.

13. Carter and Karis, op. cit., p. 124.

14. Bonner, 'The Transvaal Native Congress', p. 6.

15. Helen Bradford, 'The ICU and the Transvaal Rural Popular Classes in the 1920s', University of the Witwatersrand History Workshop paper, 1981, p. 11.

16. Apart from Bradford's recent research the major treatment of the ICU is Peter Wickens, The Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of Africa, Oxford University Press, Cape Town, 1978. I have also drawn upon Philip Bonner, 'The Decline and Fall of the ICU' in Eddie Webster (ed.), Essays in Southern African Labour History, Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1978.

17. Carter and Karis, op. cit., p. 215.

18. In this study 'Nationalist' refers to Afrikaner nationalist.

19. These are described in Sheridan Johns, 'The Birth of the Communist Party of South Africa', International Journal of African Historical Studies, ix, 3 (1976).

20. Martin Legassick, 'Class and Nationalism in South African Protest', unpublished seminar paper, no. d., p. 1.

21. Information on the CPSA during this phase of its development is drawn mainly from Legassick, op. cit., and Jack and Ray Simons, Class and Colour in South Africa, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1969.

22. Their activities are described in Anon., 'Rural Struggle in the Western Cape', Social Review, Cape Town, issue 18, May/June 1982, pp. 18-28.

23. Michael Morris, 'The Development of Capitalism in South African Agriculture', Economy and Society, v, 3 (1976), p. 293.

24. Legassick, op. cit., p. 3.

25. The impetus for the adoption by the CPSA of the native republic slogan is a subject of controversy. Edward Roux, in Time Longer than Rope, Wesleyen University, Wisconsin, 1964, views it primarily as the consequence of external influence, whereas the Simonses accord more significance to pressures in its favour within the Party.

26. Further detail can be found in Brian Bunting, Moses Kotane: South African Revolutionary, Inkululeko Publications, London, 1975.

27. Carter and Karis, op. cit., p. 310.

28. ANC activists were despatched to the reserves to hold meetings under chiefly auspices. During the late 1930s with the increasing dependence of chiefs on their Native Affairs Department stipends they became less cooperative towards the ANC. Source: Author's interview with William Letlalo, Soweto, 1979.

29. Opposition to the legislation is discussed in Richard Haines, 'The opposition to General Hertzong's Segregation Bills', Development Studies Group, Conference on the History of Opposition in South Africa, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 1978.

30. Union of South Africa, Report of the Witwatersrand Mine Natives' Wages Commission, Pretoria, UG 21 1944, pp. 125-130.

31. Alfred Stadler, 'Birds in the Cornfield: Squatter Movements in Johannesburg, 1944-1947', Journal of Southern African Studies, vi, 1, (October 1979), p. 111.

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

34. Daily Despatch (East London), 2 May, 1946.

35. For this discussion of the boycotts and the squatters' movement I have drawn upon Stadler, op. cit., Alfred Stadler, 'A Long Way to Walk', University of the Witwatersrand African Studies Institute seminar paper, 1979, and Baruch Hirson, 'Prices Homes and Transport', University of the Witwatersrand History Workshop paper, 1981.

36. See Edward Roux, 'The Alexandra Bus Strike', Trek, (Johannesburg), 21 September, 1945, p. 12, for an outline of the different arguments.

37. Stadler, 'Birds in a Cornfield', op. cit., p. 108.

38. Ibid.

39. University of the Witwatersrand, South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) Papers, AD 1189, ANC Notebooks, ANC working committee minute book VII.

40. Stadler, op. cit., p. 107.

41. Bantu World, (Johannesburg), 3 September, 1951.

42. Communist Party of South Africa, Johannesburg District, Democracy in Action, Johannesburg, 1945, p. 6.

43. University of the Witwatersrand, Rheinnalt Jones Papers, AD 843 B 3 1, Hilda Watts, 'The facts about Moroka township', typed memo.

44. See Philip Bonner, 'Black Trade Unions in South Africa since World War II', Robert Price and Carl Rosberg, The Apartheid Regime, University of California, Berkerley, 1980, pp. 179-180.

45. The following section is derived from Dan O'Meara, 'The 1946 African Mineworkers' Strike, Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics, xiii, 2 (July 1975).

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47. Gwendoline Carter and Thomas Karis, From Protest to Challenge, Volume II, Hoover, Stanford, 1973, p. 312.

48. Ibid., p. 304.

49. Ibid., p. 305.

50. Ibid., p. 306.

51. Ibid., p. 308.

52. Ibid., p. 308.

53. Ibid., p. 308.

54. Gail Gerhart, Black Power in South Africa, University of California, Berkerley, 1978, p. 58.

55. University of the Witwatersrand, SAIRR papers, AD 1189, ANC notebooks, ANC working committee book 1.

56. University of the Witwatersrand, SAIRR Papers, AD 1189, ANC 111, File 4, Speech by H. J. Hleti, 21 October, 1949.

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58. For an elaboration of this argument see Martin Legassick, 'Legislation, Ideology and Economy in post-1948 South Africa', Journal of Southern African Studies, i, 1 (1974).

59. See Tom Lodge, 'The Parents' School Boycott, Eastern Cape and East Rand Townships, 1955', in Africa Perspective, (Johannesburg), number 17, 1980, pp. 46-47.

60. See Walshe, op. cit., Chapter 14.

61. SAIRR Papers, AD 1189, unsorted box, Notes of an interview with A. B. Xuma, 21 February, 1944.

62. See Dilshad Cachalia, 'The Radicalisation of the Transvaal Indian Congress and the moves to Joint Action, 1946-1952', University of the Witwatersrand B.A. Honours dissertation, March 1981, p. 70.

63. Carter and Karis, op. cit., pp. 338-339.

64. Biographical information from Gwendoline Carter, Gail Gerhart and Thomas Karis, From Protest to Challenge, Volume IV (Political Profiles), Hoover, Stanford, 1977, and Anthony Sampson, The Treason Cage, Heinemann, London, 1958.

65. Information on the wartime history of the CPSA from: Alan Brooks, From Class Struggle to National Liberation: the Communist Party of South Africa, 1940-1950, University of Sussex, p. 25; Communist Party of South Africa, op. cit.; Anon., 'Wartime History of the Comrades', Forum (Johannesburg), 29 July, 1944.

66. As noted above this was becoming more difficult though Congress - chiefly relationships were better in the Xhosa reserves than those in the North.

67. Union of South Africa, Report of the Select Committee on Suppression of Communism Act, Cape Town, SC 10, 1953, pp. 205-217.

68. Though the CPSA's conception of national liberation was limited to the abolition of racial discrimination; they did not share the Africanists' enthusiasm for 'self determination'.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ORIGINS AND FORMATION OF THE PAN-AFRICANIST CONGRESS

The Pan-Africanist Congress's origins lay in the tensions that developed within the African National Congress during the 1950s. This chapter first examines changes in the ANC's ideology from 1950 as well as discussing certain features of its organisation. This will provide a context for understanding the disaffection of the Africanists and their secession to form their own organisation in 1959. Their progress is discussed in the second part of the chapter.

In 1950 the ANC was led by a coalition drawn from the two separate traditions of African political assertion which had shaped its history: populist racial romanticism and working class radicalism. The coalition was a frail one and in the first two years of the decade tensions were at times very evident, especially in the Transvaal. Here in 1950 Youth Leaguers under the direction of Mandela opposed the Communists' efforts to mobilise the townships in a May Day stay-away protest against Government restrictions on Communist leaders and low wages. The Communist Party itself went into dissolution shortly thereafter in anticipation of the provisions of the Suppression of Communism Bill. The issue of its influence upon the ANC continued though to be a source of dissention and controversy.

The Simons remark that with the dissolution of the Communist Party on 20 June 1950 and the absorption thereafter of its activists in the affairs of Congress, 'the class struggle had merged with the struggle for liberation'.[1] This was precisely

what the Youth Leaguers had feared, with their belief in the oppression of Africans 'by virtue of their colour as a race' rather than through their class positions. Some Youth Leaguers were to join older conservatives within the Transvaal Congress to oppose the successful election of J. B. Marks as president of the provincial organisation in November 1950. However, the most bitter opposition to Marks came not from those who opposed 'imported' ideologies and 'obscure' influences but rather from people who looked back with nostalgia to an era when politics was more socially exclusive.

> Congress wants a leader with simple methods of teaching the masses how to live; a man who has proved a success in life as apparent from their (sic) economic, social and political well being. 2

The similarities between the conservative and Youth League opponents of Marks were superficial. Both stressed race-pride in their popular appeal. But the former placed their main emphasis on the virtues of African upward social mobility - a major preoccupation being opposition to Indian trading activity within African residential areas.[3] The latter saw an ethnically-derived nationalism as the key to mass-mobilisation. For a time the conservatives, banded together as the 'National Minded bloc', appeared a serious threat to the ANC's new leaders. In the first months of 1951, J. B. Marks and other Transvaal leaders devoted much energy to establishing their authority at public meetings in the Johannesburg and Reef locations.

The Youth League was going through an important transition. Collaboration with other national executive members modified the Africanist position of Mandela and Tambo.[4] Youth League spokesmen began to pay more attention to class-based analyses.

Dilizantabe Mji, president of the Transvaal Congress Youth League from early 1951, was a good example with his reference to:

> . . . foaming racialist slogans that have peverted the minds of their fellow white men . . . driving the white workers away from the ranks of the toiling masses . . . the ordinary white man must be forgiven . . . he is not an oppressor . . . the people never to be forgiven are those who build round the lives of simple people this facade of a black peril. 5

Mji's position was not shared by everyone - in 1952 his re-election took place despite Africanist criticism of his 'ideological unreliability'.[6] In the early 1950s the League was to divide into two camps: one was to promote in the words of Joe Matthews, a 'healthy, democratic, non-racialist, anti-colonial, anti-imperialist nationalism'.[7] The other was to adhere to Africanist orthodoxy. The former camp was closer to the decision-making levels of Congress. Its leaders tended to have greater professional status and hence economic independence than the latter, many of whom were teachers, and hence less politically active.[8] For the time being, the Africanists were to content themselves by issuing ephemeral newsletters from their centres in Orlando and East London.

African communists were often ideologically rather eclectic and hence in 1950-1952 a more sensitive issue than their presence in Congress's leadership was that of cooperation with the Indian Congresses.

Anti-Indian sentiments were not confined to African businessmen. In 1948 the Newclare Youth League passed a resolution calling on the Minister of the Interior to tighten African/Indian residential segregation.[9] In Benoni, in July 1952, Indian shopkeepers were attacked and their stores looted after one

of their number had fatally beaten up an African boy he suspected of stealing.[10] Conservative opponents would often accuse the ANC leadership of being under control of Indians. However, though cooperation between Indian and African organisations would remain a contentious issue in some quarters, several factors by the beginning of the decade made it considerably easier than before. First of all, like the ANC, during the 1940s, the Indian Congresses in Natal and Transvaal became more popularly oriented. This reflected the increase in the size of the Indian industrial working class and its corollary, the spread of Indian trade unionism, the development of a professional non-commercial middle class the spreading influence within these groups of the CPSA, and finally especially in the Transvaal, the growing vulnerability of small retailers threatened both by legislation and Afrikaner nationalist trading boycotts.[11] In 1946, in protest against the new Asiatic Land Tenure Act, the Indian Congresses embarked on a two-year campaign of civil disobedience in which over 2,000 volunteers were arrested, usually for illegal crossing of provincial boundaries or the occupation of selected sites in 'white' areas of Durban. By the late 1940s, there seemed less to be gained than before from isolating Indian struggles from those of other blacks, but in any case, the new Marxist leaders of the Indian Congress for moral and ideological reasons were eager to form links with other communal struggles. This was achieved at a symbolical level with the 'Joint Declaration of Cooperation' signed by A. B. Xuma, G. M. Naicker and Yusuf Dadoo which promised a combined struggle by Africans and Indians against all forms of discrimination as well as by the participation of a small band

of African volunteers in Germiston in one of the final acts of civil disobedience.[12]

A more final commitment to alliance with the Indian Congresses by the end of the decade was stimulated by the Durban race riots, which in highlighting the tense everyday relationships between Africans and Indians, helped to persuade leaders of both communities of the dangers of their polarisation and the virtues of collaboration. The Defiance Campaign itself would tangibly demonstrate the benefits of communal cooperation; small retailers apparently provided an important financial contribution[13] and newly independent India's influence at the United Nations helped to attract international attention to the campaign. Two other factors served to bring the movements closer. In both the African and Indian Congresses by the end of the decade, Marxists had become influential at the level of leadership. In both, the influence of well-established (and hence mutually competitive) groups of businessmen had lessened with the adoption of a mass-based strategy. In the case of Natal and Transvaal Congresses the decline in their influence was accelerated by the withdrawal in 1946 of the Indian High Commissioner in South Africa and hence the end of the favoured tactic of the wealthy, lobbying.[14] In the case of the ANC, the formation of the National Minded bloc was an important development. The bloc's influence was greatly exaggerated by the Bantu World, the editor of which, Selope Thema, was the bloc's president, but its emergence was nevertheless significant for this reason.

The above discussion helps to elucidate what were rather dramatic developments given the racial isolationism of young African politicians in previous years. On the 28th June, 1951,

a five man planning council was established consisting of Moroka, Sisulu, Marks, Dadoo and Yusuf Cachalia. The Council's purpose was to establish the appropriate strategy of mass resistance to six 'unjust laws'. It reported in November recommending that an ultimatum should be presented to the Government to repeal the 'unjust laws' by the end of February. If the ultimatum was not met a campaign should begin either on 6th April (van Riebeeck's Day) or 26th June. The struggle would involve the courting of arrests by trained volunteer corps acting in violation of selected laws and regulations.

The ANC's 'Defiance Campaign' which was put into motion in June 1952 needs only a brief mention here. It confirmed the growing trend in the ANC away from Africanist communal politics and the uneven character of its impact helped to confirm the effectiveness of class-based political mobilisation. In general the ANC was organisationally strong in those areas, such as Port Elizabeth and Durban in which ANC leadership and following overlapped with those of the trade union movement. The rejection of the Africanist heritage of the 1940s was completed in 1955 when representatives of the ANC, the Indian Congresses, and two new organisations, the South African Coloured People's Organisation and the Congress of Democrats met in Kliptown to attend a multi-racial 'Congress of People'.

The tone of this gathering had been set by the racially conciliatory ANC presidency of Chief Lutuli. With Chief Lutuli's election as President-General in December 1952 the rhetoric of 'self determination' and 'National Freedom' which distinguished the Programme of Action from previous ANC policy documents appeared less often.

Lutuli himself saw the ideal future in terms of African 'participation' in Government rather than absolute control of it[15] and his nationalism was of a considerably gentler quality than that of the Africanists who had supported him in his original ascendency. He spoke of a 'progressive and liberal' nationalism with a goal of 'African partnership in the Government on the basis of equality',[16] an 'all-inclusive' position based on the acceptance of the 'fact of the multiracial nature of the country'.[17] Where Lutuli differed from his predecessors was not so much in his concept of a perfect society but rather over the means to attain it. Mass demonstrations, suffering and sacrifice were all needed to induce a change of heart amongst whites. But unlike his executive colleagues who were former Youth Leaguers Lutuli still placed much faith in the moral impact of African struggle.

In 1953 the ANC did not have a clearly articulated ideology. The Programme of Action's emphasis was on means rather than ends, on strategies as opposed to social goals. The ideological content of the document was vague and ambivalent lending itself to differing interpretations so that opposed factions could each legitimise their position by reference to it. In the wake of the Defiance Campaign ANC leaders were confronted with the problem of how to sustain the enthusiasm of their vast new following. The National Action Council (successor to the ANC/SAIC Joint Planning Council) reported a 'disquieting lull which has descended over the mass activities of Congress'. It advised that future campaigning should be based on strengthened organisational machinery and should arise from 'the concrete conditions under which people live'.[18] In August at the Cape Provincial Congress

Professor Z. K. Matthews suggested the summoning of a 'national convention at which all groups might be represented to consider our national problems on an all-inclusive basis' to 'draw up a Freedom Charter for the Democratic South Africa of the future'.[19] The Provincial Congress's adoption of the idea was endorsed at the ANC's annual conference in September. In the light of later controversy it is worth pointing out that the initial impulse to formulate a Freedom Charter came from within the ANC, from one of its less radical leaders, and that the proposal did not at first attract enthusiastic support from the SAIC and COD.[20]

On March 23rd, 1954 the executives of the ANC, SAIC, COD and SACPO met near Durban to discuss plans for a national convention. At this meeting it was decided to establish a National Action Council for the Congress of the People. It would consist of eight delegates from each of the organisations sponsoring the convention. A national organiser was appointed, T. E. Tshunungwe, one of the Eastern Cape Youth Leaguers who had become prominent during the Defiance Campaign. Ideally, the arrangements for the creation of a Freedom Charter were to have three phases. First, provincial committees would have to be established on the model of the National Action Council. At the same time the recruitment of a huge army of 'Freedom Volunteers' should begin. The volunteers were to publicise the Congress and collect demands for the Charter. The provincial committees should then work to establish committees in every workplace, village and township. The final stage would involve the election of delegates from each locality who would then meet and assist in the drafting of the Charter. 'The Charter will emerge from countless discussions among the people themselves. It will truly

be, in every sense of the word, the Charter of ordinary men and women'.[21]

Many of the Charter's critics were to charge that the way the campaign unfolded fell short of these expectations. Certainly by August provincial committees had been formed in the Cape, Transvaal and Natal. In the case of the Transvaal committee, members included a representative of the Liberal Party and Arthur Blaxall, a well-known Anglican priest, as well as people from the four Congresses. In Cape Town 27 of the 200 organisations invited to attend the meeting at the City Hall sent delegates. They included six trade unions, the Federation of South African Women, the Cape Peace Council, a number of location vigilance associations and the Liberal Party. However, the next step, the formation of local committees, never really got off the ground and much of the work of collecting demands was done through Congress branches and visits by provincial organisers. Not that the campaign did not succeed in evoking a popular response: by May 1955 the Natal committee described itself as being flooded by suggestions for inclusion in the Charter[22] and from the description of the content of some of them the feelings they expressed were spontaneous enough:

> Dr. Arthur Letele, for example, has said that messengers to tribal locations near Kimberley naturally asked leading questions, such as 'What is your idea of being free?' One reply was 'ten wives'. One of the non-African members of the NAC has stated that a committee of the council received 'Thousands of little bits of paper, many of them with specific demands, for example, "The District Commissioner is not fair to us; we want his removal"'. 23

That there were organisational inadequacies in the preparations leading up to the Congress was admitted quite

openly by the NAC and the pro-Congress newspaper, New Age. Bannings under the Suppression of Communism Act restricted an ever-growing number of the most experienced activists: for example, by November 1954 nearly the entire Natal Indian Congress elected at the end of the previous year had been banned.[24] At the same time the ANC was attempting to mobilise resistance to the Western Areas Removals and Bantu Education.[25] But organisational shortcomings of the Congress of the People were not the main reason for hostility towards it from some quarters. More important was the prominent role COD members seemed to have in its convening. This attracted criticism from outside the 'Congress Alliance' from people who initially had been willing to participate in the campaign; in particular from members of the small multi-racial Liberal Party which had been launched after the 1953 election.[26] From within the ANC there was also concern over the role of their new allies. This arose partly from tactical considerations: Tshunungwa, reporting after a visit to the Western Cape, complained of the 'extreme confusion' that was created when people discovered 'the COD men are taking a lead in the ANC meetings . . . a politically raw African who has been much oppressed, exploited and victimised by the Europeans sees red whenever a white face appears'.[27] There was also fear among the Africanists in the Youth League that white participants had the deliberate intention of diverting the ANC away from 'clear cut' African nationalism.[28] We will return to these anxieties in a moment.

While the rather hurried process of electing delegates at public meetings called in different centres was taking place in

April 1955, sub-committees of the NAC began sorting out the various demands and suggestions that had flowed in into different categories. A small drafting committee was eventually to produce the Charter drawing on the material prepared by the sub-committees. The document that emerged had a rather distinctive poetic style, possibly the influence of Lionel Bernstein, one of the drafters.[29] The Charter was presented to seven members of the ANC's national executive on the eve of the Congress of the People. Neither Chief Lutuli (immobilised by his ban) nor Professor Matthews saw it then.

The Congress itself was a dramatic affair. It lasted two days and was held in an open space near Kliptown, a coloured township near Johannesburg. It was attended by 3,000 delegates from all over the country. The various clauses of the Charter were introduced, there was an opportunity for impromptu speeches from various delegates, they were then read out and acclaimed by a show of hands. The proceedings were brought to an exciting close by a large detachment of policemen bearing sten guns who arrived in the afternoon of the second day. They took over the speakers' platform, confiscated all the documents they could find, announced they had reason to believe that treason was being contemplated, and took the names and addresses of all the delegates before sending them home. Quite obviously, the State was confident that with the Congress the ANC and its allies had been given enough rope to hang themselves: hence the degree of toleration with which it had been treated up to that point.

Read out of its context, the Charter itself appears a bland enough document. It contains a list of basic rights and freedoms. Beginning by reaffirming the multiracial character of South African

society ('South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white'), it went on to promise equal status for 'all national groups', to argue for the transfer of the mines, the banks and monopoly industry to the ownership of 'the people as a whole', to guarantee equal opportunities to all who wished to trade or manufacture, to advocate the redivision of land 'among those who work it', the ending of all restrictions on labour and labour organisations, unemployment benefits, a forty hour week, a minimum wage, free compulsory education, and other welfare provisions with regard to health, housing, the aged and the disabled.[30]

What was the significance of all this? As far as its critics were concerned, the Charter and the process which produced it were the results of manipulation and conspiracy. Peter Hjul, one of the Liberal members of the Cape Town local committee until his resignation from it at the beginning of 1955, contends that his function along with other committee members was merely to endorse pre-arranged decisions.[31] To Liberals the dominant influence in the campaign was the COD which, as far as they were concerned, was merely a front for the Communists. They found especially offensive the efforts of white Congressmen to align the nationalist movement with the Soviet bloc in the Cold War. The Liberal Party itself disassociated itself from the Congress of the People in January 1955.[32] The socialist implications of parts of the Charter appeared to them to be a vindication of their apprehensions. Africanists were at first less concerned about the contents of the Charter though later their objections would centre on the sections dealing with rights and guarantees for all national groups. It was rather the role

allowed to representatives of the other Congresses in the leadership of the campaign that they found disconcerting. In particular the structure of the National Action Council with its equal representation of the four sponsoring organisations despite their numerical disproportion was for them ominous. They viewed the Council as a vehicle through which the ANC could be influenced and even controlled by non-Africans.

There was some substance to both sets of accusations, the COD, not surprisingly, given the background of many of its activists, tended to identify itself rather more strongly with the Soviet bloc than did its partners in what had become to be known as the Congress Alliance. New Age, for example, under the editorial control of COD members, would devote much of its space to descriptions of Soviet achievements, justifications of Russian foreign policy, and criticism of Soviet dissenters. Bearing in mind their tiny following COD personalities did appear to exercise a disproportionately important function, playing a leading role at most public meetings and contributing significantly to the drafting of the Charter itself. This was predictable; many COD leaders were highly experienced politicians with considerable intellectual gifts. Whatever their colour, one would expect such people to play a dynamic role. Finally, it is true that the formulation of the Charter only involved a limited amount of consultation: certainly popular demands were canvassed but the ultimate form the document assumed was decided by a small committee and there were no subsequent attempts to alter it in the light of wider discussion. The forum provided by the Congress of the People was scarcely suited to any kind of debate.

As it turned out the Charter was not adopted immediately by the ANC. The executives of the four organisations met together at the beginning of August and agreed to recommend the adoption of the document by each respective Congress. A 'million signature' campaign was conceived to popularise the Charter and the 10,000 'Freedom Volunteers' apparently succeeded in collecting nearly 100,000 signatures to the Charter, half of them in the Transvaal. The campaign was administered by a National Consultative Committee, a permanent successor to the National Action Council. Though the new committee was to have important functions running the signature campaign wasn't one of them: it petered out towards the end of the year without much enthusiasm being generated for it outside the Transvaal. The police confiscated many of the forms during raids of volunteers' homes. The 1955 annual conference was shortened by a day because of initial objections to it being held at all by the Bloemfontein authorities. Many important leaders could not come because of their bans and branches had not received copies of the National Executive Report. Much time was wasted by a debate as to whether the conference should exclude a report from the Bantu World and there was considerable acrimony between Africanists and the National Executive. The former now had the indirect support of Dr. Xuma who had written an open letter to the ANC accusing it of losing its identity and turning against the nation-building programme of the 1940s. In the end there was no conclusive discussion of the Charter as the Transvaal delegates had to cut the conference short so as to catch their trains on Sunday morning.

Four months later a special conference was held mainly for the purpose of discussing ways of opposing the introduction of

women's passes. Despite noisy protests from a small group of Africanists from the local Orlando Youth League branch the Charter was accepted by the majority to the delegates. If any of them had any misgivings about the economic clauses (there was some unease among certain Natal delegates)[33] they were reluctant to associate themselves with the Africanists' dogmatic advocacy of the Programme of Action and hostility to 'foreign' allies and ideologies. It is likely that lack of interest was more widespread than any antipathy towards the Charter; as the National Executive complained in its annual report of 1955:

> In the Congress of the People campaign although the ANC was responsible for the creation of the Congress of the People many of its leaders and many of its branches showed a complete lack of activity as if some of them regretted the birth of this great and noble idea . . 34

The ANC's endorsement of the Freedom Charter reflected the changing character of the movement's leadership: in contrast to the decade before it was younger, less affluent, and more likely to be drawn from a legal, trade union or non-professional background than the politicians of the 1940s who tended to be churchmen, doctors, or substantial businessmen. But despite a more radical leadership the ANC was often slow and ineffective in its efforts to resist fresh infringements on existing freedoms and rights. Part of the problem arose from social tensions within existing local communities[35] which could be reflected in the resistance movement itself. There were also at times strategic differences within the National Executive - this was the case, for instance, during the efforts to mount a boycott of Bantu Education. The main difficulty, though, lay in the field of organisation.

In the course of the Defiance campaign, the ANC had become a mass movement with, by its close, approximately 100,000 members. Its estimated following fluctuated during the 1950s, paid-up members diminishing to about 30,000 in the course of 1953 but then reviving in numbers from 1957 so that the Transvaal membership passed its 1952 peak in 1958 and being swelled by thousands of new followers in Natal in 1959.[36] Such figures are an unreliable indication of the extent of the ANC's influence: subscriptions were only occasionally collected and not always reported accurately to the Treasurer General and a large number of people would have identified with Congress and participated in various campaigns without always holding a current membership card. In response to this expansion as well as to the prospect of legal constraints being placed on Congress activities, a new organisational system was proposed in late 1953 by Nelson Mandela. Critical of the 'old methods of bringing about mass action through public mass meetings, press statements and leaflets'[37] and anticipating a time when the ANC would not longer be permitted to mobilise so openly, Mandela proposed the division of branches, some of which in the course of the Defiance Campaign had grown to a size of several thousand members, into 'cells' based on single streets and headed by a 'cell steward'. Seven street cells would make a 'zone' and the 'chief steward' of each zone would unite with four others in a 'ward'. One of their number would be a 'prime steward' and the prime stewards would form a branch secretariat itself administering the ANC within the township.

As it turned out the 'M Plan' was only implemented in a few instances, particularly in the Eastern Cape urban centres which

began early in 1953 to divide themselves up. A National Executive report was to comment that in contrast to the Eastern Cape very few branches in Natal or the Transvaal had been restructured.[38]

In December 1955, the National Executive reported that:

> The national liberation movement has not yet succeeded in the organisational field in moving out of the domain of mass meetings and this type of agitation. Mass gatherings and large public activities of Congress are important, but so is house to house work, the building of small local branches, the close contact with members and supporters of their continual education. 39

It was a comment that held good for the decade. The reasons for this failure are not difficult to discern. The new system would have involved an immense amount of work, in many cases beyond the capacity of spare-time volunteers. As a Natal leader pointed out 'most people were so busy with their ordinary work that they could not find time for Congress duties'.[40] Long working hours, poor public transport, and residential areas far away from places of employment mean there was little time in the evenings for political activity. Shortage of money was another obvious impediment: the Eastern Cape was estimated by the National Executive to need 35 full time organisers to implement the scheme. They received in 1953 £100 from Johannesburg to pay them.[41] Membership subscriptions were 2s. 6d. annually, and even at this modest level were difficult to collect in a desperately poor community, for such a sum, if collected all at once, could make a significant inroad into a weekly household budget. The ANC had very few full time workers. It was still stressing the need for them in 1959.[42] The M Plan also could help to lessen the standing of local political personalities as

part of its purpose was to reduce the size of the administrative units.

Therefore many branches remained cumbersome and difficult to administer because of their numbers, communications internally and between them and national leadership remaining poor. Throughout the decade in National Executive reports there were references to letters not answered and policy decisions ignored by branches. The movement had expanded swiftly and many of its activists were not people who wrote letters easily. Contributing to the weakness of communications was the fact that the strongest ANC centres were outside the Transvaal whereas the National Executive was Transvaal-dominated and effective decision-making in any case was in the hands of a working committee of those Executive members who lived within 50 miles of Johannesburg.

State harassment added to organisational difficulties. By the end of 1955 42 ANC leaders had been banned, many of them being forced to give up office and membership of the ANC. Bans affected 11 of the 27 members of the National Executive elected or coopted in 1952.[43] One year later 156 prominent figures in the Congress Alliance were arrested and subsequently charged with treason. For the next five years the State would vainly attempt to prove in court that a communist-inspired conspiracy to violently overthrow the state had been prepared by the Congress Alliance. The Treason Trial served as a drain on the energy and resources of the accused (many of whom suffered a total disruption of their livelihoods during its proceedings). It also removed from active politics some of the ablest and most experienced men and women in the ANC leaving their places to be filled by less able people.

The consequences of these difficulties were first that effective campaigning had often to depend on local initiatives and therefore on the personal qualities of local leaders to a much greater extent than had an efficient administrative machine existed. This was not always to Congress' detriment: both the education protest and the 1957 Alexandra bus boycott provide examples of occasions when cautious national leaders were pushed into a more militant posture by rank and file assertion.[44] But it did mean that campaigns were localised and uneven in impact. It also meant that the movement was built on strong personal loyalties rather than bureaucratic control and for this reason the ideological conflicts which could strain the movement at the centre had a limited significance for the mass of its followers. The extent to which the ANC interested itself in questions of everyday life was in the ultimate analysis more important in sustaining its support than its attitudes towards whites, socialism, or the Cold War. Only if such issues could be shown to have an immediate relevance did they have much popular significance. As we shall see the fashion in which, in certain contexts, the Pan-Africanist Congress was to draw upon ordinary people's experiences with whites in articulating its racial exclusiveness was an example of this link being demonstrated successfully.

Nevertheless, ideological issues were important as they had significant bearing on strategy and methods used by the movement to evoke and control its mass following. During the 1950s the ANC was not a revolutionary organisation and it did not have a carefully worked-out long term strategy. The Freedom Charter itself, though it proposed a society which inevitably

would have necessitated the capture or at least the sharing of state power by the nationalist movement, gave no indication of the means through which this should be accomplished. To have spelt these out would, of course, have been impractical had they been known but there is substantial evidence of considerable uncertainty over methods within the ANC's leadership. As Oliver Tambo put it in 1955:

> We shall not have to wait too long for the day when only one method will be left to the oppressed people in this country - precisely what that method will be is impossible to say, but it will certainly be the only method, and when that has been employed and followed up to its logical conclusion, there will be no more struggle - because the one or the other of the conflicting forces - democracy or fascism will have been crushed. 45

Of course some of the younger leaders, as in the case of Mandela with his organisational reforms, were anticipating a period when the ANC would be forced to operate clandestinely. Joe Matthews, national president of the Youth League, saw these reforms as a preparation for the broadening of the 1952 civil disobedience into 'a mass campaign and industrial action'[46] but his views do not appear to have been representative of mainstream Congress thinking.

Consistently through all the major campaigns of the 1950s a common underlying motive seems to have been to influence a section of the white population so as to weaken ruling class hegemony. For example, as late as 1959 the Congress Alliance's Anti-Pass Planning Council was to argue:

> It is essential that the European public should be given a systematic and thorough introduction about the evils of the pass laws. It is evident that many are ignorant

> of these evils and not sufficient work has been done to educate them. Many sympathetic Europeans cannot imagine what the country would look like without the pass laws and in particular without influx control. The Planning Council recommends that a pamphlet should be written specifically for the European public and that certain leading personalities amongst the Europeans should be approached to raise and discuss the pass issue with various institutions and to lead deputations to government and local authorities. We should regard this as a second front in our anti-pass struggle. 47

Similarly, in 1958 the ANC attempted to sway the behaviour of the white electorate by planning a demonstrative stay-away from work to coincide with the general election. Hopes of a massive disaffection of whites from Nationalist policies did not simply arise from the encouraging experiences of 1950s multiracial political and social activity; both liberal and marxist orthodoxy then held to the view that economic expansion and apartheid were essentially in contradiction with each other.[48] Politics was understood in terms of exerting enormous pressure on the system rather than seeking its systematic destruction. From 1953 onwards, protest was preferred to disobedience. There were of course excellent tactical reasons for this. Congress was organisationally too weak to withstand the sanctions of the state, but nevertheless the style of protest was indicative of a desire to persuade through moral example. For instance, in 1958 the ANC Women's League and the Federation of South African Women were instructed to call off the deliberate courting of arrest by women anti-pass demonstrators. Thereafter proposals for women's action on passes would characteristically advocate nation-wide prayer meetings.[49]

Otherwise ANC strategy appears to have been to use every possible means to construct a large and disciplined following

which would allow it to exercise the decisive weight in a crisis of political authority which was only vaguely conceptualised but which all were sure would shortly arrive. At the time it was difficult to resist the exhilaration resulting from the victories of anti-colonial movements elsewhere in Africa. Contributing to the certainty that sudden and dramatic change was imminent was the fresh international interest in South Africa (which itself provided another motive to trying to maintain the moral advantage in opposing the Government). To this end Congress leaders were to employ a far greater degree of tactical flexibility than was allowed for in the 1949 Programme of Action. For example, the Programme insisted that all differential political institutions should be boycotted and for Africanists this became a cardinal principal. By 1957 it was argued that the boycott of such institutions as advisory boards merely deprived the ANC of a platform for communicating with people in an environment in which alternative methods of communication were becoming increasingly restricted.[50] The ANC participated in advisory board elections on the Rand throughout the 1950s and succeeded in gaining control of three of them. This appeared to be a symptom of its popularity rather than its isolation from ordinary people: it two cases Natalspruit and Benoni, the local ANC branches which dominated the boards were powerful and militant.[51]

The reason underlying the ANC's position concerning electoral boycotts appears in retrospect sound enough: participation did not cause loss of following. But in some instances the ANC did demonstrate considerable tactical inflexibility. In 1957 a stay-at-home call evoked a gratifying working class response. The following year workers were called upon to make a

similar response despite the fact that the main issue had shifted from wages to the election. With localised exceptions the 1958 stay-away was unsuccessful in keeping workers out of the factories. In 1959 the ANC succeeded in organising a highly successful consumer boycott of potatoes in protest against the treatment of farm labourers. This led its leadership to conclude, somewhat mysteriously: 'the economic boycott can be used effectively against the pass laws.'[52] In certain respects the lack of a clear pre-determined strategic programme was a virtue; it did encourage leaders to respond creatively to spontaneous upsurges of popular revolt. On the other hand it could lead to an unimaginative reflex type of reaction, in which no clear relationship existed between means and ends. But perhaps, given the historical context in which this leadership emerged, a unanimous and coherent approach to strategy would have been impossible. Ideologically it was eclectic and in terms of the class forces represented in the socially complex. Attempts to hammer out a common long-term strategy would have succeeded only in splitting the movement and thus weakening it. Its social diversity and ideological eclecticism were the ANC's strengths.

Many of the existing treatments of African politics during these years have placed much emphasis on conflict over ideological questions within Congress. The foregoing argument suggests that ideological issues did not have a great deal of significance in many branches: the two main areas of Congress strength by the end of the decade, Port Elizabeth and Natal,[53] were unaffected by serious internal disputes. This was not the case in the Transvaal or the Western Cape. In particular the branches around

Johannesburg appear to have been divided and demoralised. The ANC itself suggested that this contributed to the unevenness in the public response to the 1950 stay-at-home.[54] It was here that one could have expected most tension for the Johannesburg township and location branches were not characterised by the same degree of unifying interpenetration between the political and labour movements as elsewhere. It was in Johannesburg that the Youth League had always had its main base. Johannesburg had the largest black population in the country, that population probably being socially differentiated to a greater extent than elsewhere. Finally, in Johannesburg the white left played a more prominent role in the affairs of the Congress movement than in any other centre with the exception of Cape Town.[55]

By 1952 the Congress Youth Leaguers were divided into two camps and with the election of Dilizantaba Mji as CYL president in 1951 and Joe Matthews as national secretary (both incidentally students at the 'open' University of the Witwatersrand), the left-wing non-Africanist faction was in the ascendent. Matthews was to write in the CYL journal in 1953:

> . . . of a struggle within the League . . . to smash those forces which under the cloak of protecting 'the sacred principle of African Nationalism' have taken a right-wing reactionary path, hampered the mass struggles, sought to cut off contact with the masses, and maintain the League as a body in the air, periodically issuing political statements . . . 56

Africanist dissent coalesced round a group of Youth Leaguers in Orlando, one of Johannesburg's South-Western townships (today part of Soweto). Its leading figures included Potlake Leballo, Zeph Mothopeng, and Peter Raboroko. All three were teachers who had lost their jobs during the Defiance Campaign. Leballo was

born in 1924, in Modderpoort near Basutoland, enlisted during the war and by his own account led an army mutiny in North Africa, was later expelled from Lovedale teacher training college after a student strike, completing his teacher training at the Evaton Wilberforce Institute. After his dismissal from his teaching post he settled in Orlando working as an insurance salesman. Leballo was no intellectual but a colourful and effective orator, dogmatic and energetic. Mothopeng was a little older than Leballo, born in 1916 in the Eastern Transvaal, professionally better qualified holding a correspondence course B.A., a president of the Transvaal African Teacher's Association in 1950 and for a short time on the CYL national executive. He lost his post at Orlando High School after campaigning against the Bantu Education proposals.[57] Thereafter he held a variety of jobs before serving articles in 1957. Peter Raboroko, a Free State farm labourer's son, a Youth League founder and Defiance Campaign volunteer, was the theorist of the movement, his impassioned advocacy of the revival of African culture or the need for a syncretic vernacular national language first appearing in Bantu World in the early 1950s. All three men's backgrounds had features which seemed to distinguish the Africanist dissenters from the mainstream ANC leadership: a rural upbringing in the more harshly polarised racial climate of the Free State and the Transvaal (in contrast to the Transkei Cape origins of many of the ANC leaders); relatively modest professional qualifications and career achievements; at best superficial social contacts with whites.[58]

The Orlando East Youth League and ANC branches together formed after Sophiatown the largest concentration of ANC members

in the Transvaal. It was not, however, one of the most militant groups. This may have been a reflection of the difficulties of mobilising people in a municipal location as opposed to a freehold community such as Alexandra or Sophiatown as well as the social characteristics of a significant proportion of Orlando's population.

Orlando was established as a 'Model Native Township' by Johannesburg municipality in 1932.[59] Its distance from the city and consequent transport costs and its high rents tended to limit the attraction of living there to those who could afford the relative comfort of its single and semi-detached houses (except during the war, the normal practice of taking in lodgers to augment the family income was prohibited). The poor were also discouraged from living in Orlando by the high levels of municipal regulation and police control as well as the Council's practice of screening its prospective tenants. Discontent within Orlando over rent rises and similar subsistence issues was channelled into a strong tradition of parochial political activity dominated by the Sofosonke Party and the Asimimali Party, both of whom kept the ANC at arm's length. The ANC adherents tended to be among Orlando's unusually substantial middle class section of the community. A Bantu World reporter in 1951[60] chided readers living in Orlando for 'isolating themselves from the masses'. In a recent study, McIntosh has argued convincingly that Orlando's degree of internally perceived class differentiation and the relative size of its middle class provided a 'social base conducive to quiescence and likely to insulate leaders from working class pressures.[61]

Instead of popularly oriented activity local Congress members preferred conspiracy. The leadership of the ANC branch was involved in 1953 in a secret intrigue known as the 'Bafabegiya' ('those who die dancing').[62] This, under the aegis of Macdonald Maseko, Chairman of the Orlando branch and a member of the ANC's national executive, aimed to supplant the Transvaal leadership, sever any links with the Indian Congress, and commit the movement to more confrontationist strategies.[63] Maseko and his co-conspirators were expelled from the ANC in 1954. Meanwhile the Orlando East Youth League had also become increasingly rebellious under the Chairmanship of Leballo. His speeches criticising the ANC's linkages with non-African organisations and charging those Youth League officers who had accepted invitations to the 1953 World Youth Festival with being 'Eastern Functionaries' were enthusiastically reported in Bantu World. The ANC, said Leballo, had repudiated the principles of the Programme of Action by participating in Advisory Board elections and succumbing to 'foreign ideologies'. In May 1953 Leballo was expelled by the League's Transvaal executive but subsequently was reinstated by his branch. In November Leballo and his confederates began to produce a cyclostyled journal, the Africanist, in which, under such pseudonyms as 'Black Savage', 'UmAfrika', and 'Pele en Pele' the dissidents unleashed a torrent of abuse against their former associates in the Youth League:

> Go to the conferences of the ANC. What do you find? Fraternal Greetings. From? My dear friend, you are old and intelligent enough to know where they come from. They are the greetings that usually take place about sixty per cent of the time of Congress at conferences. No more of fraternal greetings. What brothers are these who loath and destroy our ideology. 64

In the next few years the Africanists were to remain a small coterie, most influential in some of the Soweto branches but with support in Evaton and Alexandra as well. In Alexandra the ANC branch was chaired for a while by Josias Madzunya, a hawker from Vendaland, with little formal education but a strident and persuasive demagogue beloved by the press and even regarded with some affection by the targets of his street corner polemics, the liberal and left-wing white Congress sympathisers:

> These whites are just bluffing you by saying that they are friendly to you. They will never be friendly . . . Europeans are like lice. They are parasites, busy sucking on blood by means of work for unequal pay. 65

Madzunya was exceptional in operating within a very different social milieu from most of his fellow Africanists, and the only one with a popular personal following (see Chapter Three).

In 1957 a crisis of authority developed in the Transvaal provincial ANC of which the Africanists were swift to take advantage. Because of the spate of bannings as well as the involvement of much of the senior leadership in the Treason Trial many provincial office bearers were politically inexperienced and in some cases incompetent. Banned leaders who exercised behind-the-scenes authority sometimes appointed nominees to take their position, rather than enacting the cumbersome procedure of electing new office bearers. In October 1957 the provincial executive at its annual conference insisted that it should be re-elected <u>en bloc</u> as a show of unity and defiance against the government. This and other administrative irregularities led to the formation by certain branch leaders of a 'Petitioners'' committee which drew up a list of complaints against provincial leaders, accusing them of rigging elections, financial malpractices

and contempt for grass roots membership. Leading the Petitioners was a Sophiatown politician, Stephen Seghali, who was reputed to have Africanist sympathies.[66] He was reputed never to carry a pass, had served a prison term on a Bethal farm and often tinged his speeches with racist invective. The Petitioners combined forces with the Africanists to demand a second provincial congress which under pressure from the National Executive provincial leaders were forced to concede. It was held on February 23rd 1958 and was an undignified affair, with brawling between Africanists and executive supporters, and ending inconclusively. Two days later the provincial executive were replaced with a temporary leadership chosen by the national leaders and of course including no Africanists. Bitter disputes continued throughout the year. In April Africanists campaigned against Congress's stay-at-home which they said:

> . . . was conceived by an amorphous multi-racial gathering at Gandhi Hall in September 1957. Launched by an amorphous SACTU meeting in Newclare. Popularised by a mysterious £1 a day committee. Then directed by a steering committee whose creation is still a mystery to us and finally called by the ANC. 67

As a consequence of their opposition to the stay-away as well as a bizarre exploit in which Congress headquarters was raided and the ANC motor car removed, Madzunya and Leballo were deprived of their Congress membership. This did not deter them from establishing an 'Anti-Charterist Council' which in anticipation of fresh elections at the November provincial conference ran Madzunya as a candidate for Transvaal president with a manifesto penned by Peter Raboroko. The Africanists, however, were to be frustrated at the conference. Many of their delegates had their

credentials refused and on the second day they were prevented from entering the hall by Congress youths armed with sticks and iron bars. Sensibly the Africanists withdrew announcing their intention to form their own organisation which would function as a 'custodian of ANC policy as formulated in 1912'.[68]

Now although the Africanists' influence has been considerably exaggerated in the press it was nevertheless a more serious rupture in African politics than those disaffections which had occurred in the past. First, it took place when the movement in the provinces which were affected had already been weakened through organisational breakdown and campaign reversals. Second, unlike for example the National Minded splinter movement, it was led by young militants eager to see Congress embark on a more adventurous course. The aggressive and vengeful mood they evoked in their speeches had a particular attraction for the young and, as we shall see, in Cape Town accorded well with the embittered feelings of Xhosa migrant workers. There had always been a potential constituency for a political leadership which played upon violent emotions and identified oppressors in racial terms. Impressionistic evidence suggests that such a constituency was beginning to include young and well educated middle class Africans to a greater extent than before.[69] It was one which ANC leaders by virtue of their social background and consequent morality had not cared to exploit. The Africanists were to show no such inhibitions.

The Africanist social landscape was painted with harsh and glaring colours. Their sensitive and sympathetic historian, Gail Gerhart, traces their vision back to an essentially peasant outlook uncomplicated with the moral dilemmas posed by emotional involvement in a western urban industrial society:

> 'What can you do with the white man?' That's what they would tell you. 'The white man is all right; there is nothing that we can do. They would also use some of the texts from the Bible, some of them, in order to show how God dictated things to be; there's nothing to be done about them. But here you would have to use powers of persuasion. You draw examples from as many different sources as you can, show the fight that went on in our country . . . The question of land, for instance, touches the African to the core of his heart. Now if you draw from the fights of Moshesh in defence of the land, every Mosotho respects Moshesh very much. Once you talk of Moshesh . . . he is bound to listen. Or you talk of Hintsa, you talk of all the other heroes, Sekhukhuni and Tsahaka and his warriors, that the land is the central point. Let us get back the land that was given us by our forefathers.' 70

Of course their appeals were self-consciously made in the knowledge that:

> The masses do not hate an abstraction like 'oppression' or 'capitalism' . . . They make these things concrete and hate the oppressor - in South Africa the white man. 71

but this need not imply they were made cynically. As we have seen the life histories of principals in the movement could reinforce a parochial and polarised outlook. They had two major disagreements with Congress leadership as it was developing in the 1950s. The first was with the role the latter allowed whites in the Congress Alliance. Africanists felt that white Congress sympathisers had mainly sectional interests, the proof of this they said was in the Freedom Charter with its clauses guaranteeing the rights and status of all national groups. Their influence had succeeded in dissolving the racially assertive nationalism which Africanists believed to have been adopted by the ANC with the acceptance of the Programme of Action in 1949.

In doing so they had deprived the ANC of the most effective ideological means of inspiring a mass following. 'Multi-racialism', as they termed it, served to perpetuate the psychological subservience and dependency on whites upon which minority domination rested. The second disagreement was over the question of spontaneity. The difference in the approaches of the ANC and the Africanists is evident in the following passages:

> . . . when a spontaneous movement takes place the duty of leadership is not just to follow spontaneously but to give it proper direction.
> (ANC national executive, 1958)
>
> We must be the embodiment of our people's aspirations. And all we are required to do is show the light and the masses will find the way.
> (Robert Sobukwe, 1949) 72

From these two positions flowed most of the other elements in Africanist thinking. Racial nationalism was a natural predisposition among the masses; all that was needed was an effective ideological articulation of popular consciousness by leadership for the masses to rise; organisational questions were of lesser importance. South Africa was a colonial society no different from any other African country, its basic internal contradiction was a racial or communal one and could only resolve itself through racial conflict:

> The bitter fundamental truth is that we have not reached a class struggle stage. We remain an oppressed nation committed to winning our freedom via the African National Liberation movement whose basic demand is to recover lost African sovereignity . . . The secondary economic exploitation we suffer as workers does not supersede the colour discrimination . . . all Bosses in this country are white and all workers are black . . . Africans have a deep seated suspicion of all white political groups. 73

All attempts to win the sympathy or at least the neutrality of a section of the white population were futile and would detract from the effectiveness of any African political movement.

With their emphasis on communal rather than class-based social distinctions, their faith in popular spontaneity, their own certainty of being the authentic interpreters of the general will, and their essentially conspiritorial preception of their enemies,[74] the Africanists had many of the features of a populist movement. Unlike European populists, though, they did not have consistent or coherent views on economic questions. It was their effort to identify with what they felt to be indigenous African political traditions rather than any systematic economic and social policies that was to generate their following among people with rural antecedents. Taking their cue from Anton Lembede PAC ideologies would talk about the creation of a new society which would draw inspiration from 'the continuity from older tribal democracies of present day forms.'[75] Their deliberate nativism, constantly reinforced with references to the era of primary conflict between Africans and whites and buttressed by social and intellectual xenophobia, was the final element in their populist identity.

Four months after their secession the Africanists held the inaugural conference of their new organisation, the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), in a highly charged atmosphere in Orlando. The conference was opened by the chairman of the Federation of Independent African Churches,[76] the Reverend W. M. Dimba, who began his address by denouncing those 'hooligans of Europe who killed our God' and proceeded to salute 'a black man, Simon of Arabia, who carried Jesus from the cross'.[77] The delegates then

elected a president, rejecting, rather to the surprise of observers, Josias Madzunya (who had disgraced himself by calling for '"God's Apartheid", that is Africa for the Africans and Europe for the Europeans'), and choosing instead Robert Sobukwe, a lecturer in African languages at the University of the Witwatersrand.

Sobukwe had been a prominent fiture in the Fort Hare Youth League, rising to be the League's national secretary in 1949. In a graduation address he had distinguished himself in a bitter attack on the paternalism of the university authorities, equating 'broadmindedness and reasonableness' in Africans as 'treachery to Africa'.[78] He lost his job at a rural Transvaal school as a result of participation in the Defiance Campaign though later he was reinstated. In 1954 he obtained his university post in Johannesburg. A self-effacing man with considerable intellectual gifts he remained in the political background, chairing an ANC branch at Mofolo in Soweto, and contributing anonymously to The Africanist. It was Sobukwe who was chiefly responsible for the refinement and degree of intellectual depth in the Africanist position which emerged at the PAC conference. Sobukwe did not subscribe to the crude racialism of Madzunya: in the columns of The Africanist, he had called upon sympathetic whites to adjust their outlook in such a fashion that the slogan 'Africa for the Africans . . . could apply to them even though they are white'.[79] But despite his comparative subtlety and thoughtfulness he shared with his colleagues their romantic belief in the political integrity of the masses.

Sobukwe's presidential address outlined the basic principles of the new movement. The PAC stood for government by the Africans

for the Africans - 'everybody who owes his loyalty to Africa being regarded as an African'. Whites, however, were for the present unable to owe their loyalty to Africa, even if they were 'intellectual converts' to the cause of African freedom, 'because they benefit materially from the present set up' and who 'cannot completely identify themselves with that cause'.[80] Pan-Africanists were opposed to 'multiracialism' in as much as it implied insuperable differences between various national groups and tried to safeguard minority interests, 'there is but one race, the human race'. Sobukwe went on to stress his admiration for Kwama Nkrumah's and Tom Mboya's non alignment, rejected South Africa's 'exceptionalism', and affirmed its common destiny with the rest of Africa and looked forward to the establishment of a 'United States of Africa'. Similarly, the PAC manifesto condemned the 'capture' of a portion of black leadership by a section of the 'white ruling class' and called upon the movement 'to forge and consolidate the bonds of African nationhood on a Pan-African basis' as well as to:

> . . . implement effectively the fundamental principle that the domain of sovereignity over the domination or ownership of the whole territory rest exclusively and inalienablyin the indigenous people.

The manifesto also prescribed 'an Africanist socialistic democratic social order' and cited the Pan Africanism of the All-African Peoples' Organisation's Accra conference (which had excited great interest among Africanists when it was held in December 1958) as the PAC's guiding philosophy.[81]

The founding conference optimistically set a target of 100,000 members to be recruited by July 1959.[82] In fact, the PAC itself was to admit at the end of the year that less than a

third of this target had been achieved and even this was disputed by the ANC and members of the Liberal Party.[83] In the columns of The Africanist of November 1959 a total of 24,664 members was broken down thus:

Transvaal	13,324
Cape	7,427
Natal	3,612
Orange Free State	301

Low formal membership did not preclude great expectations. The ANC during the Defiance Campaign had demonstrated how a movement could swell rapidly to many times its original size if it succeeded in catching the popular mood. Leballo was to claim that the PAC had 101 branches.[84] If each of these had consisted only of a few energetic activists this would have been sufficient in launching an effective mass campaign provided the PAC could inspire the crowd with its exhortations.

The PAC did not build its bases in traditional ANC strongholds. It never had much impact in Natal. In the case of the Transvaal, while it did not extend its support in Johannesburg beyond the original Africanist groups in Orlando and Alexandra, it succeeded in acquiring a following in the Vereeniging area. Similarly, in the Cape, the PAC was to grow, not in the Eastern Province towns at first but rather in the Cape Peninsula where the ANC was troubled by tensions which paralleled those which existed in the Transvaal. The ANC in the Western Cape was traditionally weak for here Africans were a minority in the population in the area and a large proportion of them were contract workers from the Transkei, a group to which the local political leaders had never paid much attention. It was in this part of the country,

for reasons which will become clearer in the next chapter, that the PAC succeeded in establishing a strong following.

For the next eight months the PAC's strategy was to remain indefinite. Sobukwe himself announced in August a 'Status Campaign' which would take the same form as some of the ANC-inspired consumer boycotts in Port Elizabeth and exert pressure for more courteous treatment of Africans in shops. Its more fundamental purpose was to exorcise any traces of 'slave mentality' and encourage the assertion by people of their 'African personality'.[85] Such modest intentions fell short of the expectations of rank and file members of the PAC, and under pressure from them as well as being motivated by a desire to keep the initiative from the ANC, the PAC's national executive at its first annual conference in December decided upon a more dramatic course of action. The ANC at its annual conference had resolved to step up its anti-pass campaign and the PAC followed suit.

Their plans were very different. The ANC proposed a series of demonstrations on days of symbolic importance, leafletting and other educational activities, and the use of 'industrial action' led by the SACTU factory committees. The Anti-Pass Planning Council also considered the possibility of civil disobedience but concluded ambiguously:

> . . . a thorough study of the meaning of civil disobedience should be made, since there are so many interpretations of what it is. And before we can embark on any form, we should be specific as to what we contemplate doing. [86]

The PAC plans were specific: on an appointed day all African men should heed the call of their leaders, leave their passes at home and present themselves for arrest at their local police station.

People should stay away from work and soon there would be a complete paralysis of the economy and the administration. All that was required was for heroic leaders to set the pace and the necessary conditions for a spontaneous popular uprising would be present.

From the history surveyed in these first two chapters, the course can be charted of two different types of political movement. The first would ostensibly appear to be the logical outcome of capitalism, urbanisation, proletarianisation and industrialisation: the development of political organisations motivated by the class interests of different groups engaged in different ways with the operation of a modern industrial economy. In a slow and spasmodic fashion the history of the ANC demonstrates the unfolding of this process. Important stages in its development included its formation by members of an emergent professional elite; the foundation of the Communist Party and the shifts in its relationship with Congress; the banning of the CPSA in 1950 and the infusion thereafter of its cadres into the ANC and allied movements; the adoption of increasingly etatist and radical social and economic programmes in 1943 and 1956; and defections from the organisation of members of the more socially privileged strata of the African population.

In the rest of this study our preoccupation will be with a representative of the second type of movement, those movements which in one way or another are fuelled by the impulse to resist the social implications of a developing capitalist economy. As such they can be labelled as populist. Because of the pace of economic development in South Africa, because of the existence of racially as well as class determined social inequality, and

because of the state's efforts to contain and restrict the scale and effects of African urbanisation, movements in this second category have enjoyed a substantial following. Beginning first where we might expect to find them, among the despairing sharecroppers who were drawn by the millenarian undertones of ICU rhetoric, populist ideology was to be more deliberately articulated by young intellectuals on the Rand in the 1940s. Some of these were themselves recent migrants from rural society and unlike more experienced urban political activists they were to empathise with and draw inspiration from the Johannesburg squatters and other poor people's movements. The latter derived little of their vitality from systematic organisation and owed much to a leadership which could excite a popular imagination which was still influenced by non-industrial rural culture. From the direct action of the wartime poor the Africanists distilled a popular strategy which attributed great potential power to a supposed popular susceptibility to revolt and which attempted to synthesize what they felt to be the motivating force in popular assertions in formal terms of a nationalist programme.

In the 1950s, under the influence of both Marxist and liberal leadership, as well as through the acquisition of an increasingly working class ethos in some of the centres of its activity, the ANC tended to define its goal as African participation in a democratic industrial civilisation rather than African self-determination. Mounting disaffection among remaining Africanist adherents culminated in the formation of the Pan-Africanist Congress. The PAC was a populist movement led by men who had an inadequate understanding of the complexity and strength of the political institutions and social structure they sought to

destroy. Nurtured on a millenarian and spontaneitist political tradition they hoped to transform society by calling upon their compatriots to withdraw from its corrupting embrace. While their rivals contented themselves with demonstrative protest, the PAC's populist leadership turned to the weapon which had been threatened so often in preceding displays of African strength: the general strike.

Chapter Two - Notes and References

1. Jack and Ray Simons, Class and Colour in South Africa, Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1970, p. 609.

2. Bantu World, 21 October, 1950.

3. Ibid., 3 November, 1951.

4. Joe Matthews explains this transition in the following fashion:

> The trend towards African exclusiveness was broken by the May 1 strike of 1950. Over that strike the Youth League split. The Transvaal branch of the Youth League supported the strike and it had mass support. Because of it a number of the Youth League leaders became anti-exclusive. Examples are Joe Matthews, Oliver Tambo, Sisulu and Mandela because they saw that they could not get into power on an exclusive platform and it was they who dominated the Youth League organisation. Those who were in favour of exclusiveness like Leballo, A. P. Mda, Sobukwe and Raboroko remained in the Youth League but as a minority opposition.
> (Carter and Karis Microfilm Collection, Reel 10a, 2 XM 65: 94/1, Interview with Joe Matthews, 1963)

5. Bantu World, 11 October, 1952.

6. Ibid., 29th March, 1952.

7. ANCYL Journal (Johannesburg), 2, 1953.

8. Teachers were forbidden by the Native Affairs Department to participate in political organisations.

9. University of the Witwatersrand, A. B. Xuma Papers, ABX 480813, R. M. Nkopo to A. B. Xuma, 13 August, 1948.

10. Bantu World, 12 July, 1952.

11. Essop Pahad, The Development of Indian Political Movements in South Africa, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Sussex, 1972, pp. 234-243.

12. These do not appear to have been ANC members. See Passive Resister, Johannesburg, 21 October, 1946.

13. David Carter, 'The Defiance Campaign', University of London, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Collected Seminar Papers on the Societies of Southern Africa, Volume 2, 1971, p. 92.

14. Pahad, op. cit., p. 253.

15. Gwendoline Carter, Gail Gerhart and Thomas Karis, From Protest to Challenge, Volume III, Hoover Institution, Stanford, 1977, p. 14.

16. Carter and Karis, From Protest to Challenge, Volume II, p. 425.

17. SAIRR Papers, AD 1189, unsorted box, NEC Report to the 1955 annual conference of the ANC, p. 3.

18. Carter and Karis Microfilm, Reel 2b, 2 DA 14/4: 62, Report of the National Action Council to the Secretary General of the ANC and the Joint Honorary Secretaries of the SAIC, 5 December, 1953.

19. Carter, Gerhart and Karis, From Protest to Challenge, Volume III, p. 12.

20. Ibid., p. 59.

21. Advance, 25 March, 1954.

22. New Age (Cape Town), 19 May, 1955.

23. Carter, Gerhart and Karis, op. cit., p. 93.

24. Robert Johnson, Indians and Apartheid in South Africa, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Massachusetts, 1973.

25. See Tom Lodge, 'The Parents' Boycott' and Tom Lodge, 'The Destruction of Sophiatown', Journal of Modern African Studies, 19, 1 (1981), pp. 107-132.

26. On the history of the Liberal Party see Tom Lodge, 'Patrick Duncan and Radical Liberalism', Centre of African Studies, Africa Seminar: Collected Papers, Volume I, University of Cape Town, 1978, pp. 108-125.

27. Carter, Gerhart and Karis, op. cit., p. 58.

28. SAIRR papers, AD 1189, ANC III, The Bureau of African Nationalism, Political Commentaries, No. 1.

29. Carter, Gerhart and Karis, op. cit., p. 93.

30. Ibid., pp. 205-208.

31. Janet Robertson, Liberalism in South Africa, 1948-1963, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1971, p. 166. See also: Jordan Ngubane, An African Explains Apartheid, Praeger, New York, 1963, p. 164.

32. Robertson, op. cit., pp. 102-103.

33. Natal delegates drafted amendments to the clause dealing with monopoly industry. One of the amendments was written by A. B. Ngcobo, one of the few Durban Africanists. He today contends that he did this for tactical reasons with the aim of provoking debate within the ANC over the Charter and disturbing the show of unanimity presented by the National Action Council. Author's interview with A. B. Ngcobo, London, 25 August, 1975.

34. SAIRR Papers, AD 1189, unsorted box, National Executive Report to the 1955 annual conference of the ANC, p. 13.

35. See, for example, Lodge, 'The Destruction of Sophiatown'.

36. For membership figures see: Carter and Karis Microfilm Collection, Reel 2b, 2DA 17: 40/13, Cape ANC's circular letter to branches, 7 January, 1954; Reel 2b, 2 DA 17: 30/19, Secretary's Report to the Cape ANC provincial conference, 15-16 August, 1953, SAIRR Papers, AD 1189, unsorted box, National Executive Report to the 1955 annual conference of the ANC; SAIRR Papers, AD 1189, ANC III, National Executive Report to the 1958 annual conference of the ANC.

37. Carter and Karis Microfilm Collection, Reel 2b, 2 DA 14/4: 62, Report of the National Action Committee.

38. SAIRR Papers, AD 1189, ANC II, National Executive Report to the 1954 annual conference of the ANC.

39. SAIRR Papers, AD 1189, unsorted box, National Executive Report to the 1955 annual conference of the ANC.

40. M. B. Yengwa quoted in Feit, op. cit., p. 74.

41. Carter and Karis Microfilm Collection, Reel 2b, 2 DA 17: 30/19, Secretary's Report to the Cape ANC provincial conference, 15-16 August, 1953.

42. SAIRR Papers, AD 1189, ANC III, National Executive Report to the 1959 annual conference of the ANC, p. 12.

43. SAIRR Papers, AD 1189, unsorted box, National Executive Report to the 1955 annual conference of the ANC, annexure C.

44. See: Tom Lodge, 'We are being punished because we are poor: The bus boycotts of Evaton and Alexandra, 1955-1957' in Philip Bonner, Working Papers in Southern African Studies, Volume 2, Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1981, pp. 258-303.

45. Carter, Gerhart and Karis, op. cit., p. 39.

46. Ibid., p. 36.

47. SAIRR Papers, AD 1189, ANC III, Anti-Pass Planning Council Plan, 1959, p. 3.

48. See for example: H. J. Simons, 'An Addendum', Africa South, October-December 1958. Also: 'It is more rhetoric to say that Apartheid is proving to be a Frankenstein . . . Operation in any guise cannot pay any country dividends' (Albert Lutuli in National Executive Report to the 1959 annual conference of the ANC, SAIRR Papers, AD 1189, ANC III).

49. SAIRR Papers, AD 1189, ANC III, Anti-Pass Planning Council Plan, 1959, p. 2.

50. SAIRR Papers, AD 1189, ANC III, Memorandum dealing with the Programme of Action, 1957. See also Nelson Mandela, 'Out Struggle has many tactics', Liberation, February 1958, pp. 14-17.

51. The World (Johannesburg), 8 December, 1956.

52. SAIRR Papers, AD 1189, ANC III, National Executive Report to the 1959 annual conference of the ANC, p. 5.

53. Port Elizabeth maintained its ANC strength during the decade. In Natal trade union expansion, rural unrest, riots in Cato Manor and Chief Lutuli's personal popularity were all factors in the rapid growth in the ANC's following in the period 1958-1959. See Tom Lodge, Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, Longmans: London, Chapter 6.

54. SAIRR Papers, AD 1189, ANC III, National Executive Report to the 1958 annual conference, p. 11.

55. For Africanists white interference in ANC affairs was epitomised by the appointment of Joe Slovo of the Congress of Democrats (and the Communist Party) to the chairmanship of a committee which expelled various people from the ANC. See: The Africanist (Orlando), iv, 10 (December 1957).

56. ANCYL Journal, 2, 1963.

57. See Lodge, 'The Parents' Boycott', p. 47.

58. Of the fourteen Africanists who comprised the first PAC national executive six were teachers, four of whom had been compelled to take up jobs as clerks or salesmen as a result of their political activities, two were university students, one was a newspaper reporter, one was a trade unionist and one was a legal clerk, and finally one was a lecturer. (Information derived mainly from Carter, Gerhart and Karis Microfilm Collection, reels 9a-14a biographical information). Gail Gerhardt in contrasting top-ranking ANC and PAC leadership found that people drawn from 'professional elite' represented 70 per cent of the former and 20 per cent of the latter, Gerhart, Black Power in South Africa, p. 319.

59. South African Outlook, 2 January, 1933.

60. Bantu World, 12 May, 1951.

61. Alistair MacIntosh, Africanism in the ANC and its basis in Orlando in the 1950s, Honours Dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 1983.

62. The group began as a fundraising society during the Defiance Campaign with the purpose of raiding money to support the families of impoverished volunteers. To this end it would hold night time dances to which admission fees were charged, hence the name: 'those who would die dancing'.

63. Information on the Bafabegiya drawn from reports in Advance, 22 October, 1952; Liberation, 7 February, 1954; The Torch, (Cape Town), 2 March, 1954.

64. The Africanist, 2, 1956. The extract is from an article by John Pokela.

65. South African Institute of Race Relations, Treason Trial transcript.

66. This was according to a report on the Petitioners in Contact (Cape Town), 3 March, 1958. The report may be misleading though, or Seghali may have become disillusioned with the Africanists, for in New Age, 14 January, 1960, there is an article about a Steven Segale, who served a prison sentence for helping to organise the 1958 stay-at-home (which the Africanists opposed). He was quoted at his trial as saying in a speech: '. . . be very careful of the Africanists who are playing a double role . . . They appear to be with the people when in truth they are with the Government.'

67. The Africanist, iv, 11, June 1958.

68. Peter Raboroko, 'The Africanist Case', Africa South, April-June 1960.

69. E. A. Brett, African Attitudes, SAIRR Fact Paper, no. 14, Johannesburg, 1963, p. 78; Gerhart, op. cit., pp. 167-168.

70. Gerhart's interview with Z. B. Molete, quoted in ibid., p. 149.

71. Golden City Post (Johannesburg), 29 March, 1959.

72. SAIRR Papers, AD 1189, ANC III, National Executive Report to the 1958 annual conference; Speech at 'Completer's social', Fort Hare, October 1949, Carter and Karis, From Protest to Challenge, p. 331 .

73. The Africanist, iv, 11, June 1958.

74. This was particularly the case with regard to the Communists - with some justification as SACP members perforce had to behave in a conspiratorial fashion because of their illegality. PAC members believe that the SACP betrayed Nelson Mandela to the authorities and in general would argue that whites and Indians who were members or organisations allied to the ANC

sought to manipulate the ANC's leaders so as to preserve 'the maintenance of the status quo' (The Africanist, iv, 11, June 1958).

75. Joe Molefi, 'Approach to African Socialism', New African (Cape Town), December 1962.

76. The prominent presence of the Zionist church spokesmen at the PAC conference indicated another significant difference in the social tone of the occasion in comparison to the characteristic tenor of ANC gatherings where if clergymen played a role they tended to come from the Anglican or Methodist churches.

77. Peter Rodda, 'The Africanists cut loose', Africa South, July-September, 1959, p. 23.

78. Carter and Karis, op. cit.

79. Sobukwe quoted by A. B. Ngcobo in The New African (London), November 1965.

80. Robert Sobukwe, 'The Africanist Case', Contact, 30 May, 1959.

81. Carter, Gerhart and Karis, From Protest to Challenge, Volume III, pp.

82. Contact, 18 April, 1959.

83. Ibid., 8 August, 1959 and 20 September, 1959.

84. Ibid., 8 August, 1959.

85. Gerhart, op. cit., p. 227, and Carter, Gerhart and Karis, op. cit., p. 329.

86. SAIRR Papers, AD 1189, unsorted box, Anti-Pass Planning Council Plan, p. 4.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SHARPEVILLE CRISIS: SHARPEVILLE AND THE CAPE PENINSULA

In December 1959 both the ANC and the PAC announced their plans for a campaign against the pass laws. The ANC's proposals consisted mainly of massive protests: March 31st, the anniversary of the 1919 pass burnings, Africa Day, April 15th, Union Day, May 31st, and June 26th should all be the occasions for nation-wide demonstrations against the passes. In cities the ANC should combine with other sympathetic organisations in leading deputations to government and local authorities. Research would be conducted into the mechanics and effects of influx control and the findings publicised in pamphlets so as to arouse 'the indignation of all sections of our people' including whites. Many of the latter were 'ignorant of these evils (the pass laws) and not sufficient work has been done to educate them'. As well as the white population who were to form a 'second front' in the campaign, special attention was to be devoted to mobilising women (nation-wide prayer meetings on 9th August) and workers. Industrial action 'should . . . be considered as a form of struggle in this campaign'.[1]

With the exception of the last provision these plans were tame stuff. They were especially disappointing when viewed in the context of the explosive situation in urban and rural communities in Natal during that year.[2] While the Anti-Pass Planning Council was considering prayer meetings and street processions, Natal activists were talking in terms of a province-wide general strike to halt the Cato Manor removals.[3] Many of the ANC leaders (including Chief Lutuli) had a principled abhorrence

for the violence of the Natal unrest. Though there was much talk of using economic and industrial power 'to defeat the government',[4] it was never explained quite how this was going to be achieved without violence. Part of the problem stemmed from the absence of any serious analysis of the society Congress leaders were confronted with. Typical were the assumptions contained within Lutuli's Presidential Address of December 1959:

> It is no mere rhetoric to say that apartheid is proving to be a frankenstein . . . oppression in any guise cannot pay any country dividends . . . Industry and Commerce are beginning to squeal . . . We are not without strength. White South Africa is vulnerable. 5

This type of thinking was not limited to liberal Congress spokesmen. In response to a pessimistic prognosis of the likelihood of revolutionary change in South Africa in the journal Africa South, a leading theoretician of the South African Communist Party (SACP) had this to say:

> Industrialisation is incompatible with . . . group or class monopoly of political (and ultimately of economic) power . . . Nowhere outside the Union does a privileged minority claim to govern by divine right. This type of despotism (is) a freak, an anachronism which cannot have much longer to survive. 6

Bearing in mind this conviction of the fundamental irrationality of Apartheid it is not altogether surprising that Congress's leaders were persuaded of the potential educative protest campaigns could have in swaying a section of the white public. Allied to this belief was the feeling, especially among older ANC leaders, that political activity, if it was to be effective, should have a moral dimension. As Chief Lutuli had put it in 1957 the road to freedom was 'sanctified with the blood of martyrs - in other words, no cross, no crown'.[7]

Obviously not everyone within the ANC leadership held to these tenets as seriously as Lutuli, but because of the social contradictions within the movement and its lack of ideological coherence, a show of unity was felt to be more important than any sustained debate over strategic problems. In the absence of any rigorous analysis long term planning was next to impossible. Campaigning was increasingly in the course of the decade more a matter of protest than resistance.

But while the Pan-Africanists' conception of their Pass Campaign was more in tune with mass disaffection in certain areas its intellectual foundations were equally shaky. Ideology (in the crude sense of a defined programme and accompanying set of slogans) was seen as a weapon, a crucial ingredient which up to that point had been absent from the spontaneous upsurges of popular rebellion of recent years. All that was required was the correct message expressed in terminology with which ordinary people could identify, and popular rage would cohere into revolutionary uprising. The PAC leadership was convinced that Africanism made articulate a deeply rooted racial-nationalist popular consciousness. A political appeal founded on such sentiment would immediately attract a massive support. Heroic and self-sacrificing leadership would inspire a similar degree of courage and selflessness in the masses. The fundamental problem of mounting an effective campaign was in the style and content of leadership offered to the African population. Few of the Pan-Africanist leaders had played an activist role in ANC campaigning and it is not surprising that they paid so little attention to the problem of organisation. Such community

struggles as the bus boycotts of the 1940s and 1950s that provided them with such convincing evidence[8] of the possibilities of mass spontaneity had been conducted round immediate, tangible material issues. They ignored the difficulty of linking the resolution of these issues with the development of a more far-reaching political struggle, a difficulty which had defeated Congress on numerous occasions. As shall be seen the response to the PAC campaign in the Western Cape appeared to vindicate their optimism. This response, however, was conditioned by the particular situation of a section of the Cape Town African community. By defining South African oppression in terms of race and psychology the Pan-Africanists had a belief in the uniformity of African political behaviour which was naively idealist. Their narrow introspection led them, like the ANC, to grossly underestimate and simplify the power and coercive capacity of the state. The PAC's campaign for resisting the pass laws reflected their assumptions about South African society. On an appointed day PAC followers would leave their passes at home and follow their leaders to police stations and present themselves for arrest. Women were told to stay at home.[9] The PAC's action would inspire massive participation and as prisons filled up and industry and commerce were paralysed by a general strike of national proportions (and indefinite length) irresistable pressures would build up forcing the Government to abolish passes. This victory would be succeeded by a 'never-ending stream of campaigns' culminating in a struggle for political 'independence' to be concluded by 1963. The pass campaign itself would be conducted in a strictly peaceful fashion so as to offer no unnecessary provocation of violent

police reaction. PAC leaders privately conceded that in the future violence would probably be unavoidable; their insistence on its avoidance in the pass campaign was tactical.[10]

Just over three months were to elapse between the adoption of a campaign strategy at the PAC conference and its launching on March 21st. This haste can be attributed partly to the disregard many Pan-Africanists had for organisational matters. But there were other factors which may have contributed to the PAC's impatience. First, since the movement's inception, the pass laws had been a central preoccupation in speeches made at township meetings and indeed the characteristics of future PAC action were made quite clear well before December 1959. For example:

> People are being assaulted daily for passes which have been introduced by the Europeans, but come to the PAC to get a medicine to cure you and show that a European is an enemy. I will pass a resolution in December 1959. What you should do away with is criminality. Don't kill your own people. We are going to throw the pass away because we are prisoners.
> (Joshua Mashaba, 20 September, 1959) 11

and:

> I will lead you, I will be in front. . . . The thing is (for) the mothers to put food away, put money away, we will call you. We may not come back from where we will be going to. Passes, permits, that is their waterpipe, . . . close that waterpipe, we want to fight those acts one for all.
> (Robert Sobukwe, 1 November, 1959) 12

As the first excerpt indicates, the idea of a pass campaign came from below, from the ordinary members of the PAC, for whom Sobukwe's 'Status Boycott' mooted originally in August 1959 and launched formally in February 1960 had little appeal. Jordan Ngubane, a prominent African critic of the ANC and a member of

the Liberal Party on good terms with the PAC leadership, has suggested that the PAC decision to swiftly embark on a confrontationist course was externally prompted. According to Ngubane's account, shortly after the PAC conference, while the PAC executive was divided over the timing of the proposed campaign, letters were sent through a foreign contact of Ngubane's to various African governments to ask for assistance. The Ghanaian authorities replied encouragingly, urging the necessity for a showdown with apartheid, and promising financial and diplomatic support.[13] Ngubane suggests that this served to weaken the position of the more cautious leaders like Sobukwe, who were concerned the campaign should not be mounted precipitately. A final motive for urgency was the desire to pre-empt the ANC whose first mass demonstration was to take place on March 31st.

Outside the Cape Peninsula and the Vereeniging district of the Southern Transvaal, where, for reasons which will be discussed below the PAC had begun to constitute itself as a mass organisation, there was little evidence of systematic attempts to mobilise grass roots support for the movement. Fairly frequent open air meetings were held in Alexandra, the home of the one PAC leader who had a significant popular following, Josias Madzunya. Josias Madzunya was one of the leading political personalities of Alexandra. Arriving from Vendaland in 1931 he attended a Communist Party night school and later took a correspondence course in public speaking. He earned his living selling cardboard boxes on a Johannesburg street corner where he would deliver lengthy political harangues. He was an

energetic political activist, belonging to various marxist groups in the 1940s before joining the ANC. By 1955 he had a reputation as a committed Africanist which led to his expulsion from the ANC branch of which he had been chairman. Undismayed, Madzunya and his confederates constituted themselves as a rival ANC branch and proceeded to provide determined and effective leadership to the Alexandra bus boycott of January-April 1957. The boycott only temporarily united the various rival politicians of Alexandra, by its conclusion they were once again bitter enemies, Madzunya and his confederates charging that the ANC had sold out to the bus company and employers. Madzunya was a striking looking man, large, bearded, dressed regardless of weather in a shabby black overcoat and an imaginative and powerful orator. He was known by the press as the "Black Verwoerd" because of his frequently racist invective, but this did not diminish his standing in Alexandra. The more genteel Orlando Africanists were alternately grateful for and embarrassed by the publicity he attracted to their cause; Madzunya the street peddler was no thinking man's Africanist.[14] In early 1960 Madzunya and other main PAC figures absented themselves from the Rand on two occasions: once in early January to attend the annual conference of the Basuto Congress Party (support from Basuto politicians was going to be useful later on),[15] and for two weeks the following month when Sobukwe, Leballo and Madzunya toured Durban, the Eastern Cape and Cape Town. With the exception of Cape Town attendance at the various meetings called on their behalf was disappointing.[16] In Durban especially, they might have expected a more excited reception. Just over a week

before their arrival, in the Ezinkawini area of Cato Manor, when the inhabitants were being screened and resettled, nine policemen were attacked and killed while on a liquor search. The incident which provided the initial provocation was when a policeman stepped on a woman's toe while searching a shebeen but underlying the conflict were all the unresolved tensions arising out of poverty, fear of resettlement and official harrassment which had lain behind the previous year's unrest in Cato Manor. In Natal, however, the ANC was too strongly entrenched for the PAC to make any significant impact. Here the ANC was sensitive to the popular frustration and anger reflected in the Cato Manor riots: on February 18th, a 4,500 strong meeting called by Congress at Durban City Hall made plans for a general strike and a bus and beer hall boycott in protest against the removals to Kwa Mashu.[17]

Undeterred by the uneven impact of the movement on March 4 Robert Sobukwe sent out final instructions for the conduct of the campaign to PAC branch and regional executives. Two weeks later Sobukwe wrote to the Commissioner of Police, General Rademeyer, warning him of the campaign's launching on March 21, and assuring him of its non-violent intentions. In particular he stressed that crowds should be given adequate time when asked to disperse by the police. Two days later, simultaneously with the Cape leadership, Sobukwe held a press conference and outlined the PAC's intentions as well as exhorting his followers to refrain from any violent or emotional behaviour. The next day, Saturday 19, at a meeting presided over by the African clothing workers' leader, Lucy Mvubelo, the Federation of Free African Trade Unions

of South Africa (FOFATUSA)'s chairman and the PAC's Secretary for Labour, Jacob Nyaose, promised the support of FOFATUSA affiliates who would go on strike for the campaign's duration. The Federation was a group of African trade unions which had held back from affiliating with the South African Congress of Trade Unions, the ANC-aligned trade union grouping. The most powerful of its nine affiliates was the African Clothing Workers' Union. The FOFATUSA members had been until this meeting opposed to political affiliations and it was unlikely that their leaders could be depended upon to provide wholehearted support for the PAC's campaign. Nyaose was a veteran trade unionist who, since his break with the Communists in the 1940's, had been a bitter critic of involvement by the white left in African politics. FOFATUSA was funded by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and that body, according to Nyaose, tried to persuade him to attempt to postpone the pass campaign. None of the FOFATUSA affiliates, notwithstanding Lucy Mvubelo's presence at this meeting, called their members out on strike during the following weeks.[18]

Meanwhile, at a less public level other preparations were completed. As response to the campaign would indicate, except in the case of Cape Town and Vereeniging, the PAC had made little effort to create strong committed branches in different centres. Instead successive layers of leadership were prepared, each of which would take over the functions of the one above it as each echelon of the organisation was arrested. This was consistent with overall PAC strategy which hinged on the quality of leadership rather than organised mobilisation. A final precaution was taken on Sunday 20th, when two members of the national executive,

Nyanga near Cape Town did the PAC's call to action seem to have attracted a popular response. The events in the Cape will be examined shortly. First we will look at impact of the Pan-Africanists in the Vereeniging district, starting with the structural factors which helped to shape the African community's response to their campaign.

The industrial centre of Vereeniging, fifty miles south of Johannesburg had grown up round the Union Steel Corporation, a steel works based on wartime surplus scrap-iron founded in 1912, conveniently near the Vaal River coal deposits. The town's industrial importance was confirmed in 1941 when the state controlled Iron and Steel Corporation (ISCOR) established its second plant ten miles from Vereeniging, at a new township called after the ISCOR chairman, Vanderbijlpark. Round these two steel works there developed a wide range of steel based industries which rapidly expanded during the Second World War as Vereeniging became the centre of South African munition production. By the end of the war Vereeniging's population included 12,000 whites and 30,000 blacks, a threefold expansion over the past decade. Originally Vereeniging's African population was concentrated in the Top Location founded in 1912 on what was then the municipal boundary. On stands rented from the council African landlords built houses and lean-to shacks which they rented out. As the location's population expanded living conditions became increasingly unhealthy: in two months in 1946 out of a population of 15,000 nearly 150 had died of pneumonia, 85 of gastro-enteritis, and a further twenty-four from tuberculosis.[22] In 1937 socio-economic tensions sparked off by liquor raids had

exploded into a violent riot in which two police were killed. Following the recommendations of the subsequent government commission of inquiry but motivated also by the potential value of the Top Location land, as well as a typhus epidemic the Council began to negotiate the purchase of a new site from the Vereeniging Estate Company. The first houses of the new township were built in 1942 on a site two miles from Vereeniging, named after the Mayor, John Sharpe. At roughly the same time the two townships of Bophelong and Boipatong were constructed to house the ISCOR African labour force at Vanderbijlpark.[23] By the standards of the time these were model townships, their neat rows of boxy dwellings being supplied with street lighting and running water, sanitation, and, in some cases, bathrooms. Sharpeville was tightly and effectively administered, with its own police station and a superintendent, as well as other facilities provided by the municipality: a brewery, clinic and weekly film shows. By official criteria the new location was a glowing success: compared to the Top Location the incidence of disease was minimal and in the first quarter of 1946, whereas over 500 crimes were reported in the Top Location, only thirty-eight were brought to the attention of the Sharpeville police.[24]

The resettlement of the population of the Top Location was a gradual process taking place over a period of fifteen years as houses became available in Sharpeville. There are no reports of resistance to the removals: compensation to the landlords was paid at a rate determined by the Advisory Board and the Council and they did not make any protest.[25] It would have been unlikely that they would have aroused much sympathy: in 1951 the mean rent for a lean-to shack in the Top Location was 15/- on a stand

which on average was shared by twenty-one people.[26] The Council was renting its new houses at 27/6d. and because the removals were so gradual, if people could not afford the higher rent they could always stay on in the Top Location for the time being.

Not all of Vereeniging's African population lived in Top Location or Sharpeville. Many of the major employers housed a large section of their workforce on their premises in single male hostels. In 1960 in the Vereeniging District (which included Vanderbijlpark) nearly 50,000 people lived in municipal townships and another 11,000 in employers' compounds.[27]

Despite its size, proximity to Johannesburg and industrial importance, Vereeniging had never been an important centre of political activity among Africans. Municipal officials again and again throughout the 1950s would proudly assert the "peace-loving and law-abiding" character of the Black population, and the absence in its townships of the "riots and boycotts instigated by the Bantu" which had marred the recent history of so many other urban centres.[28] And indeed the available records support their testimony. In 1950 pamphlets did circulate in the Top Location and Sharpeville itself calling on people to support the May Day strike and a meeting was held in the Top Location, but with a subsequent ban on gatherings and threats of dismissal by employers, May 1st passed uneventfully enough.[29] Two years later, the only local reactions to the Defiance Campaign reported were a well-attended meeting held in Sharpeville in July by the Society of Young Africa[30] at which its spokesman attacked the ANC, and a second SOYA meeting held two months later after which SOYA claimed that its support in Sharpeville was "very large".[31] Further evidence of SOYA activity appeared in 1953 when the

superintendent informed the Advisory Board of a secret meeting at which plans for a boycott of the coronation festivities were discussed. The shocked members of the Board advised the ejection from the township of these mischievous agitators who in any case were almost certainly outsiders.[32] Whether this advice was followed is not known but the Coronation was celebrated with picnics and souvenir mugs distributed to school-children without protest or interruption.

For the next six years there were no further reports of "agitation". The degree of local political quiescence was evident in the lack of any resistance to the issue of women's passes; indeed, "so many presented themselves for registration that the number had to be controlled daily."[33] This obviously requires some explanation. The apparent local political apathy was particularly surprising, bearing in mind the liveliness of nearby Evaton during its two year bus boycott. Yet in Sharpeville it seems that the ANC had failed to establish a token presence.[34] One reason for this may have been the controlled environment in which so many workers existed which made the organisation of trade unions very difficult thus depriving the ANC of a normal source of energetic activists. Of the total African employment in Vereeniging manufacturing, nearly 15,000 out of 16,798 worked in industries which relied chiefly on migrant labour recruited from the nearby Free State reserves and housed in inaccessible compounds.[35] Other inhibiting factors may have been the relative newness of the township communities and the strict official supervision under which they lived. The local authorities were unusually hostile to manifestations of African political life: even contestants for positions on the compliant Advisory Board

were prohibited from canvassing votes at public meetings.[36]

By the end of the 1950s, for various reasons, unemployment, influx control, poverty and police activity were having a peculiarly forceful impact on the Vereeniging African population contributing to its receptiveness to militant political leadership. Sharpeville's population comprised nearly 21,000 children, nearly 7,000 adult women and 8,600 men.[37] It was therefore a predominantly youthful population. In the late 1950s youth unemployment was an increasing problem. The main local industries with their requirements for cheap heavy manual labour preferred to recruit from the reserves[38] and industrial wage-levels and conditions did not appeal to township school-leavers.[39] To exacerbate this in 1959 there were not enough high school places in Vereeniging to accommodate Junior Certificate holders.[40] According to The World "scores of youths roamed the streets" and in Bophelong 7,000 residents had gathered to warn the authorities of the dangerous situation created by the Pass Laws which prevented their children from seeking work on the Rand and helped to turn them "into jailbirds and criminals".[41]

This was not the only reason, however, why influx control might have aroused an unusually intense degree of antipathy in Vereeniging in 1960. In September 1959 the resettlement of the inhabitants of Top Location was finally completed. Whereas over the decade they had been moved out at a rate of a few families a month towards the end of the process the pace quickened so that during August the final removals affected 3,000 people. In the last few months of the removals the official statistics indicate that not all the people moved out of Top Location were being accommodated in Sharpeville: the discrepancy

in the declining population of the one and the rising population of the other amounted to 213 in December 1959, 75 in February 1960, 61 in March, 182 in April, 436 in May, 48 in June, 642 in July and 3,060 in August.[42] The Council's Director of Non-European Affairs explained the disparity by referring to the large number of families in Top Location who were unable to pay the higher rentals of Sharpeville and so could not live there. These people, accordingly, had been endorsed out to the reserves.[43] So what had happened was that in under a year, 5,000 people, all of whom would have had close links with the recently settled element of the Sharpeville population, had been driven out of the area.

For those who remained there were other difficulties. Many of the new tenants in Sharpeville were hard put to pay their rent, particularly as the new houses were the most expensive in the location at £2 15s. a month. If people were in arrears they were without warning locked out of their homes and refused certain services: in one case a family was not permitted to bury a corpse in the township graveyard.[44] In January 1960 the Town Clerk reported that in Sharpeville there were 2,310 rent defaulters - accounting for over a third of the households. An angry protest meeting took place at the beginning of March outside the township offices, at which, according to the newspapers, women stoned the Superintendent.[45] The authorities denied the stoning and went on to allege that there was nothing spontaneous about the protest; people had been intimidated into attending after receiving threatening leaflets issued by both the ANC and the PAC.[46] In addition to high rents Sharpeville residents were affected by the presence of a

vigorous local police force: liquor raids were a daily occurrence and statistics indicate a rise in the level of influx control arrests and prosecutions in the first part of 1960. Unemployment figures were also increasing.[47]

All these conditions provided fertile ground for the first PAC activists who reportedly arrived from Johannesburg in mid-1959 to establish branches in Sharpeville, Bophelong and Boipatong. They need not have been particularly well-informed about local grievances for the Vereeniging area was an obvious place for them to choose. No opposition to their work would be forthcoming from the ANC, and in Evaton, twelve miles away, Africanists for some years had played a prominent role in the affairs of the community.[48] The visitors from Johannesburg had their entry permits withdrawn after a couple of days by the Superintendent for "talking politics" but this did not inhibit the progress of the new organisation.[49] Its local recruits worked with caution and discretion, avoiding public meetings, and working instead through door to door canvassing with small groups gathering indoors at night to discuss future strategy.[50] They were thus able to escape unwelcome attention though complaints began to be received by the authorities in September of PAC incitement against members of the Advisory Board.[51] The Board was an easy target on which to focus popular discontent; judging from its minutes its members either ignored or were unaware of the recent tensions and difficulties which have been described above. By the end of 1959 the PAC in Sharpeville had approximately 150 followers.[52] If its local leadership was typical it was an organisation of quite young, comparatively well educated, working-class men and women. Members subsequently interviewed by a

Commission of Enquiry were all in their twenties and included an unskilled labourer, a seamstress, a dry cleaning worker, a delivery man and a chauffeur. Most were junior certificate holders.[53] In contrast to the Reef, PAC preparations on the eve of the pass campaign were systematic and extensive in the Vereeniging district. On Thursday, March 17 a crudely reproduced typed leaflet was in circulation in the townships telling people to stay away from work the following Monday. On Sunday afternoon PAC activists approached bus drivers and warned them:

> We beg you, our people, tomorrow we must be as one. We are not going to fight the Europeans. We just want to alter this pass law because it is hard on us . . . if you run away you might get hurt . . . We will lay our hands on the one that does not . . . 54

One bus driver testified to the commission of enquiry that he and some of his colleagues were taken away from their homes in the middle of the night and not released until after sunrise.[55] The evident attention PAC activists in Sharpeville paid to disrupting public transport may have been inspired by the experiences of the Evaton bus boycott. Telephone wires linking Sharpeville with Vereeniging were cut during the night of the 20th. Police patrolling the township on Sunday evening on several occasions interrupted large gatherings of young men.

Early on Monday morning the first passengers began forming queues at Sharpeville's Seeiso Street bus terminal, near the new police station. PAC pickets appeared and told them they should not go to work, but in any event no buses arrived. PAC groups were also posted on the road to Vereeniging to stop pedestrians and cyclists. By eight o'clock a large crowd had formed in the open space in the centre of the township. Similarly in Bophelong

and Boipatong a large group of people gathered in both locations and then joined forces to march, 4,000 strong, in a procession to Vanderbijlpark police station. At Evaton 20,000 people assembled outside the police station.

The degree of success the PAC branches had had in mobilising the populations of these townships can of course be attributed partly to their success in halting public transport and picketing. But this could not have been the only explanation. The PAC even where it was strong was not a large organisation and did not have the capacity to coerce support. Police evidence of intimidation does not accord with the eyewitness accounts of the character of the crowds which had formed: these were expectant and cheerful rather than browbeaten and resentful. In any case the Vanderbijlpark commuters did not depend on public transport as the locations were within easy walking distance of the town. For pedestrians a few scattered pickets would not have presented unsurmountable obstacles to getting to work. Response to the PAC's campaign in these townships was surely a reflection of local conditions and in particular disruptive and aggravating impact on the lives of sections of Vereeniging's African population.

The size of the crowds took local police officers by surprise. Their subsequent reactions were to be conditioned by the relative novelty for them of handling large political demonstrations (more experienced reinforcements arrived late in the day) and an acute (if mistaken) consciousness of their vulnerability. Their behaviour may have been influenced by the memory of the recent attack on policemen in Cato Manor (the commission report accepted police testimony to this effect). In the cases of the crowds at Vanderbijlpark and Evaton, these were dispersed by 10 o'clock

after a baton charge in the former and low-flying Sabre jets in the latter. In Vanderbijlpark one man was killed when police fired on a group of men whom they alleged were stoning them. At Sharpeville the aircraft failed to intimidate people. The police had already declined to arrest those PAC supporters who had presented themselves at the head of the crowd. According to the police the PAC officials refused their order to disperse the branch secretary, Nyakane Tsolo, saying "We will not call them off until Sobukwe has spoken".[56] Many members of the crowd believed that an important announcement concerning passes was going to be made and this contributed to their determination to remain where they were. Police reinforcements arrived through the course of the morning, some of them in Saracen armoured cars. At 1.15 p.m. with nearly 300 police facing a crowd of 5,000 a scuffle broke out at the gate which breached the wire fence around the police station. A police officer, accidently or deliberately, was pushed over. The attention of the front rows was focussed on the gate and they surged forward pushed by people behind them who wanted to see what was happening. At this stage, according to police witnesses, stones were thrown at them. The more inexperienced constables began firing their guns spontaneously. The majority of those killed or wounded were shot in the back. Altogether sixty-nine people died, including eight women and ten children. 180 people were wounded.[57]

In the days which followed the shootings while the population of Sharpeville mourned Vereeniging was held in the grip of a general strike by the workers from the townships. The steel and metal industries with their compound labour-force managed to maintain production but the smaller industrial and all the

commercial employers were affected. Domestic servants stayed at home (ironically they had been forbidden to live on their employers' premises the year before). Only after the mass funeral had taken place on Wednesday, March 30, did the people of Sharpeville trickle back to their jobs.[58]

With the Sharpeville shootings the police had effectively broken the back of the PAC campaign in the Transvaal. In the Cape Peninsula, however, a similar sequence of events marked only the opening act of a drama which was to reach its climax the day the African people of Vereeniging buried their dead.

The events of March 1960 came closest to representing a crisis for the South African state in its political capital, Cape Town. To understand the way this crisis developed and the fashion in which it was resolved an understanding of local political relationships, and in particular of the two political groups most directly involved in the events, the PAC and the Liberal Party, is essential.

Most members of the tiny and at that stage predominantly white Liberal Party were repelled by what they took to be the inherent racism of the PAC's rhetoric. Only a minority among them believed that the PAC's position was closer than that of the ANC to Liberal ideology. In particular, there was the group which by 1958 had taken over the leadership of the Cape division of the Liberal Party, and which though radical, was also anti-communist. The Liberal Party itself had been founded in 1953. Its founders had expressed a faith in the traditional institutions of Cape liberalism and they announced their intention to employ democratic and constitutional means, stating at the same time

that they were opposed to all forms of autocracy, including communism. At first the Liberals advocated a qualified franchise and though they dropped this policy in 1954 they continued until 1959 to insist on the desirability of progressive stages of enfranchisement. Though they were well to the left of established parliamentary opposition, to black and white Congressmen the Liberal Party appeared to be gradualist, moderate and patronizing. Increasingly, however, the Liberal Party came to be composed of people who rejected constitutional strategies and an important figure in this respect was Patrick Duncan.

Since his participation in the Defiance Campaign (for which he served part of a three month prison sentence) Patrick Duncan had steered an idiosyncratic political course. Disappointed in his efforts to join the ANC in 1953 and unable to accept the left-wing stance of the Congress of Democrats he finally joined the Liberal Party, serving as its national organiser in 1956-57. In 1958 he sold up his farm on the Lesotho-Free State border and moved to Cape Town to edit Contact, a fortnightly newspaper. Contact, like its owner-editor, was to be a constant source of controversy. It embarrassed the Liberal leadership as much by its criticism of Chief Lutuli's alleged susceptibility to Communist influence as for its enthusiastic championing of African political aspirations. From the perspective of the revolutionary left Duncan appeared at best as misguided. But eccentric and undisciplined as Duncan's behaviour may have seemed to his contemporaries it was nevertheless motivated by deeply held moral and political principles. From the early 1950s he had been a Gandhist and it was his belief in the efficacy of

passive resistance and the morality of Gandhi's Satyagraha which was to influence his response to the PAC. For when the PAC called for "absolute non-violence" in the execution of its campaign, Duncan recognised in this the spirit of the Mahatma.[59]

Though Contact was not a Liberal Party newspaper those who worked on it were Liberal Party members. They shared with Duncan his anti-communism, a dislike of gradualism and a desire to make the Liberal Party a considerable force in black politics. Though they were not all as inclined as Duncan to openly criticise the ANC they were far less willing than Liberals elsewhere to work with COD, with whom they were competing for influence. Several of Duncan's associates felt before he did, that the Pan-Africanists' misgivings about the Congress Alliance were the same as their own and that the PAC's emergence was a promising development. They felt that the PAC could be persuaded to be less ambiguously non-racial. It was this group based around Contact which had managed to supplant the old Cape leadership of the party with its hostility to mass action and its penchant for franchise qualifications.

The PAC, in its public statements, was as critical of the Liberals as it was of white Congressmen, for it held that both groups, whether they meant to or not, could only dilute the force of the struggle. The PAC leaders pointed to the disparity between the living conditions of the black man and the most committed and radical white political activist and concluded that "no white man can identify himself with the struggle of the black people in this country."[60] The PAC president, Robert Sobukwe, warned his followers in May 1959 about their "so-called friends" who were out to confuse them; in particular he mentioned Bishop

Ambrose Reeves, Trevor Huddleston and Patrick Duncan.[61] Despite this, the PAC was prepared to accept help from white groups - provided it was given unconditionally. Peter Hjul, Liberal divisional chairman in Cape Town, remembers that the PAC had made an approach to the Liberal Party National Executive in February 1960 to ask for money to support dependents of those who were going to take part in the PAC campaign.[62] Hjul also thinks that Sobukwe told Kgosana, the secretary of the Cape PAC, that only two organizations would provide disinterested help: the Liberal Party and the Black Sash, a movement of white women who concerned themselves with black civil rights and social welfare. Certainly PAC leaders had been willing to discuss their policies with Liberals in Johannesburg in the months leading up to the campaign.[63] The fact was, the PAC was short of money, and while it was publicly hostile to and privately wary of the Liberals, at least the latter, unlike the COD, had no formal connection with the ANC.

The relative success the PAC had in attracting support in the Cape Peninsula should be understood in the context of the especially aggravating situation of the local African population. Africans were traditionally a minority in Cape Town, 109,804 inhabiting the Greater Cape Town area in contrast to over half a million coloured people and 373,000 whites. This population had undergone a swift expansion recently: fourteen years earlier the number of Africans in Greater Cape Town totalled 35,000 and the dramatic increase in this population can be linked to the town's growth after the war as an industrial centre. Most of the African labour force was employed in the building industry (ten per cent), manufacturing

(eighteen per cent), as service workers (thirty one per cent), as domestic servants (twenty per cent) and in the railways and harbour (seven per cent). It was an unusually unskilled and recently urbanised African workforce, its status attributable to the presence of a large coloured population whose members filled the positions occupied in other urban centres by Africans. A high proportion of the male workforce (42 per cent, nearly a quarter of the whole African population) were migrant workers on one year contracts.[64]

Notwithstanding its small size, the Peninsula's population was the object of much official harassment. In 1955 the Minister of Native Affairs announced the curtailment of African migration to the Peninsula. Ideally, he said, there should be no Africans in the Western Cape. Coloured workers should be employed in their place. The Coloured Labour Preference Scheme became effective from 1958. A year earlier the Urban Areas Amendment Act tightened influx control. As a result, between 1955 and 1962 the official number of registered male African workers fell by nearly twenty per cent.[65] The process of 'endorsing out' quickened towards the end of the decade. Between January 1959 and March 1962 18,931 and 7,280 women were transported to the already overpopulated reserves.[66] Increasingly the African community was male migrant labourers and anything that might strengthen the tendency towards a settled balanced African urban community was discouraged officially. Between 1953 and 1960 the proportion of men to women in the African population increased from 1.43 : 1 to 2 : 1.[67] In 1960, therefore, the African population of Cape Town was suffering from

recently imposed government measures more severe in their effect than restrictions on urban Africans anywhere else in the country.

This population lived either in the officially designated African townships of Langa and Nyanga or in a number of squatter camps which had developed with the post-war influx of people from the Transkei and the Ciskei seeking employment and relief from rural poverty. The largest of these settlements was Kensington in the Windermere area. Together with men and women who dwelt on employers' premises, the inhabitants of the squatter camps comprised nearly half the African population. The camps had been built on what was originally private land but in 1954 the sites were taken over by the municipality. Approximately 3,000 families lived in Windermere and in 1960 they were confronted with the prospect of enforced resettlement in Nyanga. Resettlement held the risk of 'endorsement out' as well as the possibility of having to find another job. This was because part of Nyanga was outside the municipal area and consequently people who had formally worked in the city would now have to find jobs in the suburbs.[68]

Langa was the oldest established municipal township in Cape Town, its construction beginning in 1927. By 1960 it accommodated 25,000 people, 19,000 of them adult men of whom 17,500 contract workers lived either in 'barracks' and 'zones', grim single storey dormitories arranged around dusty yards or in the 'flats', eight blocks of double rooms. The remaining 1,500 men in Langa lived with their families in the small houses provided by the municipality.[69] Just over a quarter, then, of Langa's inhabitants were 'townspeople'; that is, people who had been born in Cape Town

or some other town. The rest were migrant workers, mainly Xhosa-workers. Anthropologists have divided Langa's population into four categories: migrant labourers, semi-urbanised, urbanised 'townees', and 'decent people'.[70] In brief, migrants, though working for a large part of their lives in an urban environment remained socially and culturally oriented to rural life. The semi-urbanised originated as migrant workers but aspired to become townsmen while retaining some links with the countryside for the sake of bringing up their children and their own security in old age:

> The semi-urbanised man behaves very much as a townsman while he is in town, and seeks to move out of the barracks or zones into the flats or a room in a private house, but he does not cut his ties with the country. His wife may or may not join him, but he still thinks of country life as better for an older, settled man. Many women remain semi-urbanised in their attitudes and values even though they have lived in town for some years and their husbands have become real townsmen. 71

The townees were distinguished both from the professional or lower middle class "decent people" by their flashy clothes, youth, preference for certain types of factory work, violent "wild" behaviour, and contempt for the rural conservatism of the migrants and the middle class "respectability" of the decent people. In Langa the majority of the population belonged to the first category and lived in the barracks and zones where they could live in dormitories with people from their home region. The aspirant townsmen tended to concentrate in the double-roomed flats. Whereas people in the migrant group were thought to make up a third of the Greater Cape Town African population it is likely that the rurally urbanised men attempted to avoid the barracks and zones though as the flats had room only for 1,300

many still lived as lodgers in the squatter camps. In 1960 this option was becoming closed off to them. The townees and decent people of Langa lived in the family housing. These categories are vague conceptually and statistically, but they are the most useful available in helping us to determine amongst whom the Pan-Africanists were to develop their following.

Although Langa was thought to be a serene African community compared to those around Johannesburg, conditions were deteriorating during the 1950s. From 1954 the government had refused to sanction the construction of any more family accommodation in Langa.[73] Government policy was that eventually all families should be "repatriated" to the reserves. At the same time there was an influx of "bachelor" migrant workers who were being rehoused in the "zones" as the squatter locations were concentrated and eliminated. Endorsing-out and its concomitant, influx control, required progressive restrictions on movement and employment opportunities for migrant workers. Migrant workers who had previously remained aloof from townspeople's preoccupations began to concern themselves more with political issues. Moreover rural opposition to land rehabilitation and Bantu Authorities also affected the reactions of workers from the reserves.[74]

Nyanga, formally established in 1946, had by 1960 become the second major concentration of the Cape Peninsula's African population. In 1956 former squatters, flood victims and families evicted from Langa began to be housed in the Nyanga "Emergency Camp". The social links between townships created by these "resettlements" were to be important in contributing to the solidarity of the different African communities. By 1960 over 20,000 people lived in Nyanga of which less than a quarter were

accommodated in proper houses.[75] The rest were allotted plots of land at £1 a month ground rent on which they had to construct shacks from whatever material they could find. People who had to resettle in Nyanga received no assistance to build new homes. Many had to do without running water, fetching water from communal taps on the far side of the township.[76] In 1959 1,200 families were brought from Windermere to a new annexe of Nyanga, Nyanga West (the older part of the township becoming Nyanga East). The seething resentment flared into open anger after their arrival. Former squatters in Nyanga West attacked policement on a liquor raid and shortly thereafter 200 women protested against the raids, rents and poor conditions to the Bantu Affairs Commissioner.[77] His reply to them was as brusque as his treatment of a more decorous delegation from the Advisory Board. If people disliked living in Nyanga they could go to the reserves; nothing was going to be done to encourage Africans to remain in Cape Town.[78]

On the whole migrant workers had been neglected by established political parties. Migrants were commonly criticised for their apathy about working conditions and their lack of political motivation. By 1960 it is probable that social conditions were such that the migrant population was far more politically receptive than was popularly believed. Quite apart from the pass system on which the increasingly repressive apparatus of influx control rested, there was also the simple fact that 50 per cent of the black population were living on incomes barely adequate for subsistence and certainly not enough to cope with rent or price rises.[79]

It has been suggested that the PAC in Cape Town was predominantly a movement of 'townsmen, frequently unemployed sons of the working class or middle class families that had lived in the Western Cape since the mid-1920s'.[80] In fact, as shall become evident later in this chapter, the Cape Pan-Africanists were more broadly socially representative than this description implies. All groups in Cape Town's African population found themselves in deteriorating situations in 1960. The migrants were threatened with losing their jobs to coloured workers. The modest social ambitions of the semi-urbanised had recently been harshly denied by government policy. The towndwellers also faced the possibility of 'endorsement out' and together with the semi-urbanised many of them had been affected by enforced local resettlement and the expulsion of their wives and families from the Western Cape. It should be borne in mind that the PAC's style was heroically and traditionally orientated. This might have had a considerable attraction for Xhosa workers from the culturally conservative Transkei and Ciskei. As we shall see the PAC did manage to establish a following in the 'bachelor' hostels and flats. In the context of increasing social tension even a slight degree of organisation could be sufficient in obtaining a mass response to the PAC's call to do away with passes. In 1960 the grievances of both urbanised and rurally oriented Cape Africans were especially acute and it can be conjectured that migrant workers were beginning to share the political concerns of the black townsfolk. The disturbed and unbalanced nature of Langa society, and the government's deliberate sabotage of any social stability in Nyanga and the squatter communities had created a mood which was volatile, angry and desperate.

The ANC was not a powerful force in the Western Cape. In the 1950s the movement was bedevilled by squabbles between those who favoured the Congress Alliance and those who felt, with the Youth Leaguers of Orlando, that multiracialism weakened African control of their political destiny. The stronger branches were outside the metropolis, in the agricultural centres of the Boland where the SACTU-affiliated Food and Canning Workers' Union had its greatest support. In Cape Town itself there had been only token participation in the major ANC campaigns of the decade. Not surprisingly, bearing in mind Cape Town's demographic features, multiracialism was an important dimension of Congress activity, and in 1958 three ANC branches broke away declaring themselves to be Africanists.[81] Apparently inspired by the proceedings of the Basutoland Congress Party conference at which some of them met prominent Transvaal Africanists,[82] the secessionists formally constituted themselves as PAC members in May 1959.[83] The original nuclei of Africanists were in Nyanga, Kensington and probably Langa.[84] Additional PAC branches were established in Langa Flats and in the squatters camp at Crawford. The most detailed information available concerns Kensington branch of which the minute books of the original Africanist Committee and the PAC executive have been preserved. These records shed a little light on the movement's character in the squatter community. It was led by a group of fairly experienced former ANC members; the two leading office-holders, Madlebe and Bomali were described in a court record as 'labourers' in their forties and fifties.[85] Apparently until September the membership of the branch consisted entirely of 'old men'[86] though soon after the

branch began to attract the 'youth'.[87] In common with other PAC branches in the area most recruitment was done through public meetings, though there was a plan to 'zone' Kensington for a 'door to door campaign' in order to construct a 'cell system'. This was only beginning to be put into effect in early 1960.[88] As well as organising public meetings (held from February 1960 in conjunction with the Nyanga West branch which was composed of people evicted from Kensington) Kensington's PAC activists journeyed to Worcester, Somerset and Stellenbosch to build up support for the movement. Their conception of the movement's ideal social character is revealed in this comment from the minute book:

> (The organisers travelled) to Worcester with the intention of organising. They arrived at 1 p.m. They succeeded and left a promise to the effect that they would be coming and join all the parties they have lectured and <u>see to the intellectuals who would be legible to take posts</u>. (my emphasis) 89

In terms of the social categories described above the Kensington leadership fitted somewhere between the 'townees' and the 'decent people'. Peter Bomali, for instance, the branch chairman, aged fifty-five, had worked on a farm in the Free State before arriving in Cape Town in 1940. He had received no schooling and lived in great poverty with his diabetic wife and a son who suffered from epilepsy.[90] The Kensington branch was the largest of the Cape Town branches with a total strength in November 1959 of 154 members.[91] It would be unwise, though, to generalise about the PAC in the Cape Peninsula from the evidence provided by the Kensington branch. From its establishment in July 1959 there was a flourishing PAC branch in the Langa

Flats, home of the 'semi-urbanised' migrants.[92] A special 'conference' was held in the Flats in January 1960 to encourage the affiliation to the movement of more migrants.[93] The 'youth' of Langa Township contributed to the movement's socially heterodox character by forming an especially energetic and effective PAC 'task force'.[94] According to the memoirs of one of the PAC leaders the best organised branch was in Nyanga West, among the displaced squatters.[95] Here again the Kensington minute book is revealing when it notes that 'Mr. Mgweba saw this influence, no work, no passes, amongst the women in Nyanga West'.[96] It would appear from the very incomplete evidence available that the PAC succeeded in evoking support from a broad cross-section of the Cape Town African community: the only group from which it did not attract a significant following was the middle class 'decent people', the 'intellectuals' mentioned perhaps rather wistfully in the above-quoted passage from the Kensington minute book. The substantial migrant component of its membership, that of the Langa Flats branch, gave the local movement a distinctiveness. Certainly many of the PAC speakers had this constituency in mind with their evocation of the spirits of Makana, Hintsa and Mghayi[97] and their rejection of Western deities:

> We should always remember our customs so that we should always be lucky, in what we are doing. Now we belong to different churches and have forgotten our God, Qamata. Why do we worship another nation's God. 98

Also relevant to migrant preoccupations were the frequent denunciations of 'the traitors, the African chiefs at the reserves, that is why there was culling and selection of cattle'.[99]

It was in the bachelor flats of Langa that Philip Kgosana, a young university student, began to meet Pan Africanists.

Philip Kgosana was a political novice. The son of a Transvaal village priest, he had managed to obtain an Institute of Race Relations scholarship to pay his university fees. He lived in great poverty in one of the Langa flats. He wrote to Patrick Duncan for help and was given £2 and a Contact sales commission. But it was his friendship with an Africanist which provided a measure of security: 'When I needed money I just told him like a child and he gave it to me'.[100] Drawn into the PAC he failed his first year exams and decided to abandon his studies.

Much of the organisation of the PAC in the Cape peninsula was the work of Nana Mahomo, also a University of Cape Town student, but a politician of some experience as well. He had helped lead the 1957 bus boycott in Johannesburg's Western Native Township[101] and was a member of the PAC's national executive. He left Cape Town on the eve of the pass campaign to raise support abroad for the PAC. Mahomo and Kgosana were untypical in their social backgrounds; most of the Cape Town PAC leaders would have been more comfortable in the company of Madzunya than with the Orlando intellectuals. While only seven of the thirty-one men put on trial for incitement after the campaign came from migrant workers' quarters none worked in a white-collar job. Twenty-nine of them were described in court as 'labourers' though in most cases they were men with some education and work-skill.

Philip Kgosaba was not the only Pan-Africanist in Cape Town to have had some contact with Duncan and his friends. Nana Mahomo

had lodged with Joe Nkatlo, a leading member of the Liberal Party (and a former Africanist within the ANC). Nkatlo was a close friend of Duncan's. Christopher Mlohoti, one of the original Nyanga East Africanists, had been to the Liberal Party's office early on to put the PAC's case and so impressed one of the Liberals he met there, Randolph Vigne, that Vigne sent a motion in favour of supporting the PAC to the Liberal national executive in February 1960. The Cape Town Liberals, especially those like Duncan and Vigne who were associated with Contact, were perceived by local PAC men as sympathetic.[102]

By December 1959, the PAC had established a few branches and recruited perhaps 1,000 men in the area,[103] but they did not appear to have had an enormous impact on the African population. Initial enthusiasm seems to have waned. Kgosana found, after returning from the first PAC national conference in Orlando, that the Regional Executive had adjourned until 20 January, this despite the fact that the national leadership had announced their programme of 'positive action'. On 24 January the Regional Executive was dismissed and a more energetic group assumed control. The new executive was dominated by men from Nyanga East and the Langa bachelor quarters and it included Kgosana and Mlohoti among its officeholders. Kgosana was appointed Regional secretary.[104] By late February, after a visit from Sobukwe and Leballo, the PAC was capable of drawing 300 people to a meeting in Nyanga.[105] Leballo had been in especially good form as he addressed a crowd in Kensington on the subject of the impending campaign:

> Everybody felt the electricity as Potlake Leballo, National Secretary, climbed on to the platform and waved his pipe in the air.

> His powerful voice rang out in Sesotho: 'Ke Potlake wa ho Leballo u gu thweng oa bona lefatshe es glno le thopilwe ka badischabo'. (This is Potlake of the Leballo, of whom it is said 'hold your shield lightly, your father's land has been looted by foreigners'.) 106

On 18 March, simultaneously with Sobukwe, Kgosana announced the pass campaign would begin on the following Monday. Like Sobukwe he was emphatic the campaign should eschew violence: 'We are not leading corpses to a new Africa'. He went on to warn that if:

> . . . violence breaks out we will be taken up with it and give vent to our pent up emotions and feeling by throwing a stone at a saracen or burning a particular building we are small revolutionaries engaged in revolutionary warfare. But after a few days, when we have buried our dead and made moving graveside speeches and our emotions have settled again, the police will round up a few people and the rest will go back to the passes, having forgotten what our goal had been initially. 107

There is some evidence that in the weeks immediately preceding the campaign PAC workers had systematically attempted to mobilise African resistance in the Cape. The diary of one of the organisers, Ralph Mbatsha, had entries which included a mention of a visit to Worcester on 13 March.[108] The entry was perhaps significant; Worcester was an important centre for the Food and Canning Workers' Union, which was composed both of African and Coloured workers, and was one of the few places where Coloured workers were to join Africans in striking during the following weeks.[109] PAC men were able to enter the Cape Town docks on 19 March and with the tacit consent of the watchmen distribute their leaflets and persuade dockers to stay away from work.[110] A 'Task Force' of young volunteers had been formed in

Nyanga and Langa. These were aged between ten and seventeen and their proposed function was to control crowds and prevent violence.[111]

On the eve of the campaign, Sunday 20 March, large meetings were held in Langa and Nyanga - both addressed by Kgosana, who claimed afterwards that he had spoken to 5,000 'sons and daughters of the soil':

> At the end of the meetings, the massive crowd poured their hearts out when I led them in singing 'Unzima Lomthwalo Ufuna Madoda'. (The burden is heavy, it needs men.) 112

On Monday it was raining. This was understood as a good omen for the campaign by those men in the bachelor zones who began assembling outside the Langa New Flats early in the morning.[113] By Kgosana's arrival at 6.00 a.m., 6,000 men had gathered to listen to his instructions to march to Langa police station and surrender themselves for leaving their passes at home.[114] Then Mlami Makwetu, a docker and the Langa Flats branch secretary repeated the earlier insistence that there should be no violence. When the police arrived, they warned Kgosana that a march on the police station would be interpreted as an attack. Kgosana agreed to disperse the meeting, but also informed the police that no one would be going to work that day. In dispersing the crowd Kgosana allegedly told people to reconvene at 6 p.m. where there would be 'word from the national office'.[115] The police station was subsequently picketed by PAC 'Task Force' men who kept demonstrators at a safe distance from it.[116]

Similarly at Nyanga PAC supporters congregated on the rugby field. Women stood around bus stops mocking those who went to work. At 7.30 a.m. the first batch of volunteers started for

Philippi police station. A Liberal, who lived in Nyanga, Collingwood August, wrote in his diary:

> I am surprised at the large number of peasant-type demonstrators. Normally they take little interest in politics. They are the migrant labour and they are the section of Africans hardest hit by the pass laws. But it is still surprising and a revelation that at last a political call that appeals to them has been raised. 117

The Police station at Langa was reinforced: by the evening there were to be over 60 police armed with sten guns, riot sticks, revolvers and Saracen armoured cars.[118] At one o'clock the PAC leaders heard over the radio that over 40 demonstrators had been killed outside Sharpeville police station.[119]

Kgosana then went to Cape Town to visit men who had already been arrested at Philippi. In town he called at the Contact office where a very excited Patrick Duncan told him: 'You have poked the bees but you must be careful. Anything can happen tonight.'[120] According to Duncan, Kgosana 'understood the dangers of the situation and the ever present possibility of violence erupting.'[121] Certainly Kgosana was anxious to keep his men in check. He told Contact:

> The senior officer in charge of the police refused to arrest me. He wanted to know who would control the demonstrators when I was in goal. I told him that our demonstration was opposed to violence. At this he shook my hand in congratulation. 122

Kgosana's accounts of this meeting have changed over the years. When he wrote his life story for Drum in 1961, small details had already begun to differ from the statements he made to newspapers (notably Contact) in March 1960. In 1963 he again outlined the events in angry denunciation of Duncan[123] and more recently he has written to the author repeating and amplifying

the accusations he made in 1963.[124] Whereas his Drum account depicts Duncan as enthusiastic about the campaign from the beginning, in his 1975 version Kgosana claims that Duncan advised him on 19 March not to participate in the campaign and was annoyed and surprised to learn that Kgosana was a PAC member. But Peter Hjul (Liberal Party Provincial Chairman) says this is nonsense.[125] Not only did the Liberals know that Kgosana was a member of the PAC but the radical Cape Liberal faction had deliberately helped him previously for that reason. That Duncan was enthusiastic and hopeful about the campaign is borne out by an article in Contact published just before the campaign begun.[126] Kgosana does not mention that Duncan took him over to the Cape Times office to make a statement which emphasized the PAC's peaceful intentions. Judging by the Drum story and the diaries and memoirs of others present at the time,[127] Kgosana and Duncan were on good terms that day.

The Contact Liberals' exhilaration was understandable. Their enthusiasm for the PAC arose from a complex set of ingredients. They mistook the PAC's tactical injunction on violence for a principle. The Pan-Africanists' hostility to communism suited them too, particularly as they chose to ignore (or were unaware of) the lack on any doctrinal objections to communism in the speeches of PAC spokesmen (who mainly concentrated on the "foreignness" of communism and its exponents in South Africa). There was emotional reason for identification with the PAC cause among younger members of the Liberal Party. Like young black intellectuals (with whom there was more social contact than had ever taken place before) whites of radical sympathies were infected by the end of the 1950s with a sense of

crisis and of imminent change. As Lewis Nkosi has commented:

> It was a time of infinite hope and possibility; it seemed not extravagant in the least to predict that the Nationalist government would collapse . . . it was a time of thrust, never of withdrawal. 128

The circumstances which stimulated this mood included the experience of a decade of mass political campaigning, the apparent inability of the state to suppress African opposition, the swelling chorus of international criticism of South Africa and the euphoria produced by decolonisation. It led some Liberals to take up rather illiberal positions: an admiration for mass militancy, for toughness and for confrontation. Duncan's adherents had little faith in the pressure-group tactics favoured by many of their Liberal Party colleagues. They sought involvement in a popular struggle and saw in the sudden mushrooming success of the PAC the appropriate vehicle for this.

While Kgosana was in Cape Town 6,000 people gathered in the New Flats area in anticipation of the evening meeting. The police, who had toured the location in loudspeaker vans during the afternoon broadcasting a ban on public meetings arrived in force with Saracens and sten guns at 5.45 p.m. After giving an inaudible command to disperse they mounted two baton charges on the crowd. This only had the effect of transforming a peaceful gathering into a furious one. Some people began stoning the police and a large number surged forward. The commanding officer ordered his men to fire. Two people were killed and the rest fled. That night rioting broke out in Langa: police patrols were attacked; four churches were destroyed;[129] municipal offices were burnt to the ground; African policemen's houses were looted; telephone wires cut and roads blocked to prevent the entry of fire

engines. The mutilated body of a coloured man who had driven two white journalists into Langa was discovered the next day.[130]

The strike was to gather momentum throughout the week. On Tuesday at 8.00 a.m. the hostels in Langa were raided and policemen burst into rooms and beat up anyone they found in them.[131] Kgosana spent the morning in hiding[132] but visited Duncan in the afternoon.[133] The PAC erected road blocks in Nyanga and the bus crews stayed at home.[134] On Wednesday, Duncan held a bizarre dinner party to which he invited Kgosana, Thomas Ngwenya of the ANC, Randolph Vigne, and Anton Rupert, the tobacco magnate. Duncan's diary is cryptic: "A useful and friendly meeting", but Randolph Vigne remembers Rupert, a committed government supporter, being heavily patronising, drawing comparisons between immature African political development and unripe fruit and telling Kgosana that these days were likely to be the great moments of his life and he had therefore better get on and enjoy them.[135] Duncan had believed that Rupert, whom he saw as a figure with some influence, was open to persuasion to act on the PAC's behalf. Kgosana himself was to declare that the aim of the campaign had been to put pressure on industrialists who could appeal to the Government to lift the pass laws so that the work force would return to work.[136] But the meeting was inconclusive: by all accounts neither Kgosana nor Rupert made much impression on each other.

On Thursday, March 24, Kgosana spent much of the day in Cape Town, both in the Contact offices and those of New Age,[137] despite his own warning to his followers not to heed what New Age, in particular, said about the campaign.[138] Duncan warned Kgosana that if he had anything further to do with the Congress of Democrats

he would have to cease counting on Liberal support (the day before, Duncan had agreed to arrange for the Liberals to obtain food supplies for strikebound Langa).[139] Kgosana did not tell Duncan that he had already negotiated through Brian Bunting for the COD to deliver a truckload of food.[140] At the time, he ostensibly accepted Duncan's contention that to approach COD people was to contravene Sobukwe's orders.

That evening Wilson Manetsi, a PAC regional executive member, left Langa, and presented himself with 100 volunteers at Cape Town police station for arrest.[141] By now the Cape peninsula was the only area in which the PAC campaign was continuing. While workers were beginning to trickle back to their jobs in Vereeniging in Cape Town the stay-away was increasing its impact; the next morning fifty per cent of the African labour force was on strike.

The PAC leaders, Makwetu, Kgosana, Nxelwa and Ndlovu, led a demonstration outside Cape Town's Caledon Square police headquarters. Estimates of its size varied between 2,000 and 5,000. Here there are different versions of what subsequently happened. Duncan's diary states that at 9.30 a.m. a telephone call came from Philip Kgosana who was on the Grand Parade in the middle of Cape Town, which warned him that the people of Langa were on their way to hand themselves over to the police.

> They have seen yesterday the police had room to arrest 101 men and they want to join them. Come quickly. 142

At the time of Kgosana's telephone call only a small group had arrived, but soon the street was dotted with groups of men and when Kgosana approached the police station from the Grand Parade they gathered in a crowd in front of it. Kgosana's different

accounts have it that the crowd had come merely to demand the release of those already mentioned (which contradicts what he told reporters at the time) and he does not mention phoning Duncan.[143] But Hjul, like Duncan, remembers that Kgosana asked Duncan to join him outside the police station.

Duncan arrived to find a 'good-humoured and relaxed crowd'; he noticed many dockers and saw approvingly that 'Task Force' runners were preventing the demonstrators from blocking the pavements or disturbing the traffic.[144] Ndlovu and Kgosana had already been arrested and taken inside the police station. Duncan then persuaded the police chief, Colonel I. B. S. Terblanche, who was facing the crowd, to negotiate with those PAC leaders still at liberty. This he agreed to do and at 11.40 a.m. five PAC men, Terblanche and Duncan went into the building. What happened then was subsequently transcribed in the record of the trial of the PAC leaders:

Duncan: . . . these people have come to be arrested for failing to carry their passes. Is there no way in which you can satisfy them - even if it is just by taking their names? They are peaceful and the crowd is under control of their leaders.

Terblanche: But I am not going to arrest any one of them.

A little later:

Terblanche: Do you see any room here to accommodate all the people?

Makwetu: But yesterday you have arrested 101 of our friends and we want them to be with us.

Terblanche: But I'm telling you here and now that I do not want to arrest any African for not carrying a reference book. They will, as in the past, be warned to appear in court.

Makwetu: This is not good enough for us - we will never carry passes again.

A little later:

Terblanche: What will you do to get the people home?

Makwetu: Let me tell them on your instructions that they need not carry passes any more.

Terblanche: I cannot give you that permission but I'm willing to give instructions to my men that for a period of one month they will not ask for reference books.

Makwetu: But Colonel, we never want to carry passes again.

Terblanche: Look, this position cannot go on as it is at present, the locations are in disorder, road blocks have been put up to hamper the police in the execution of their duties, the people are hungry and children will die of hunger in the locations if this position is allowed to continue, but your men are responsible for it. Why are you bringing yourselves into disrepute?

Makwetu: But Colonel, we are willing to go to work right now but we do not want to carry passes.

Duncan: Your problem is to get the people away from the street and back home.

Duncan: On what the Colonel said, that he is willing to give you a month's time to sort this position out, will you not try to take your people home.

Makwetu: Two of our friends are here, we do not know where and we cannot go back without them. 145

Duncan interceded again at this point and succeeded in persuading Terblanche of the wisdom of releasing Kgosana and Ndlovu. It is worth noting at this point the key role Mlami Makwetu played in these negotiations. Makwetu was the leader of the migrant worker members of the PAC: that he should have had the stature to argue on behalf of his colleagues is indicative of the importance of the PAC's migrant following. With Kgosana and Ndlovu released the PAC leaders left Terblanche and went out in front of the crowd, which was told by Makwetu to return home. The crowd shouted him down but marched off chanting and singing, carrying Philip Kgosana shoulder high.[146]

That evening Terblanche's local *ad hoc* suspension of the pass laws was dramatically extended to cover the whole country by General Rademeyer of the police and J. M. Erasmus, Minister of Justice. It was the first time that a Nationalist Government had conceded to an African political initiative and the action reflected the uncertainty of the government's handling of the crisis.

Kgosana said later that he was furious Duncan had taken it upon himself to negotiate for the PAC.[147] There is no contemporary evidence for this and subsequent events suggest no break in their friendship at this point. After all, the PAC had won a considerable victory; they had succeeded in compelling the police to negotiate and offer concessions and Duncan's part in persuading both sides to talk to each other was crucial in this. Duncan helped to create the relationship which was emerging between the PAC leaders and the police, but it was also the result of Kgosana's own concern that tension should be avoided when dealing with the authorities. In the short term this relationship was to strengthen the PAC's hold on the townships. Hjul claims that Duncan's object was to enhance the importance of the PAC - to establish a *de facto* recognition of the PAC's control of the locations and to restrain the police from interfering in them. Judging by the increasing success of the strike in the days that followed it is probable that police harassment did lessen. An indication of the degree of PAC control is given in August's diary:

> I put in a brief appearance at the *Contact* office, I must leave soon. The permission given to be by the task force, the youths of the PAC who have complete control of the townships, is due to expire.

In Langa this was probably consolidated by the closeness of the PAC to the Langa Vigilance Committee; the two organisations together arranged the funeral of police victims and money was collected by PAC men on behalf of both groups.[148] Duncan's diary says that by March 26 "PAC committees were completely in charge of Nyanga and partly in charge in Langa." PAC influence was further strengthened over the weekend when they assumed control of the distribution of food supplies. Duncan, with the aim of prolonging the strike and with it PAC ascendancy in the townships, had energetically canvassed businessmen for funds as well as persuading wholesalers to replenish trading stores. Relief supplies were taken in by lorries driven by Black Sash women escorted by Kgosana and his task force. Duncan's support, though, was not altogether uncritical:

> The Nyanga East Committee came into the offices of Contact . . . They asked us to introduce them to the police . . . Before the committee went off to see Terblanche I told them I had sensed, on the Wednesday, that the police were very worried about the road blocks that had been built in Nyanga. I said it was difficult to see the point of them, that the police could only regard them as a provocation and as a challenge to their authority and that it might be wise to pull them down. They claimed that they had been put up by the tsotsis but that they would do what they could. 149

Contemporary sources suggest that by the beginning of the second week the strike involved 95 per cent of the African labour force.[150] The strike was given extra impetus by Lutuli's call for a one day stay-at-home to mourn the dead of Langa and Sharpeville. The Johannesburg Star reported that coloured people were blacklegging in Cape Town but at Worcester, where the coloured and African workers were integrated into a single union, coloured workers joined the strike. On the day of the

strike legislation was introduced to ban the PAC and ANC.

Nyanga PAC had been rendered leaderless earlier in the campaign by the arrest of its chairman, Mlohoti. The committee sent a message to Duncan asking him to discover from Terblanche what had happened to Mlohoti. We do not have Terblanche's reply; Duncan does not mention what happened when he raised this matter. We do know that Duncan used this opportunity to assure Terblanche that the Liberals were behind the police so long as they kept the peace "by reasonable and humane methods".[151]

Terblanche must have suitably impressed because he helped Duncan and Kgosana persuade an electrical goods supplier to lend a public address system to the Langa PAC committee. Terblanche also agreed that no uniformed police would be at the funeral for which the electrical equipment was needed.[152] The 50,000 people who attended Monday's funeral in Langa included many ANC men who joined the singing of "aphi no majoni?" (Where is the Soldier?).[153] The Cape Times recorded that apart from sporadic stoning of cars on Vanguard Drive, the major highway out of Cape Town, the occasion was peaceful. People arrived from all parts of the Western Cape to be greeted with shouts of "Afrika" and the clenched fist PAC salute. A small group of whites were seen to give the salute too. PAC speakers told the crowd that the strike should continue, repeated their earlier warnings against violence and declared that in spite of recent events the Africans had no hatred for any other racial group.[154]

Up until Monday, the three PAC committees in Nyanga East, Nyanga West and Langa were unable to co-ordinate their efforts. The Contact group succeeded in creating liaison between them.[155]

Food deliveries to the townships organized by Duncan and other Liberals provided some relief to the strikers, although it is difficult to estimate their impact. Contact claimed that the Liberals raised £1,500 worth of food.[156] The South African Coloured People's Organisation sent food donated by Indians into Langa,[157] and the COD provided a lorryload. As political gestures they were important: it must have enhanced the PAC's influence to be food distributors, but the food could not have gone very far in meeting the needs of 60,000 workers and their dependents.

On Wednesday, over 1,500 people were arrested all over the country and the government declared a state of emergency. Most of the detainees were members of the ANC or allied organisations though their numbers included a few Liberals as well. No Liberals were arrested in Cape Town;[158] apparently the Minister of Justice had requested Duncan's arrest, but Colonel Terblanche had advised against it. Without Liberals providing him with a link with the townships he could not guarantee law and order.[159] Hjul thinks that Terblanche had a special regard for Patrick Duncan because Duncan's father, the Governor General, had been responsible for his early promotion. This may have been true but it was not enough to prevent Terblanche's men from repeating their attempts to break the strike. Police had broken into houses in Langa on March 28 and they had shot at those attempting to escape.[160] Early on Wednesday the police raided Langa with immense brutality.

It was this last action which provided the immediate provocation for the march of the 30,000. It came after ten days of political crisis, after a strike which had brought Cape

industry to a standstill, after mass demonstrations had wrung concessions from authority, and after black people in Cape Town had had a chance to feel their power in a way that had never happened before. The march is thought to have been spontaneous. That is, it seems there was no elaborate organization for it, it had not been planned in advance and it could not really be said to have been led. The impression one gets is that the march was as much the result of the growing groundswell of political confidence among Cape Town Africans, as a reaction to the police cruelty that morning. The Langa committee did claim at the time that such a march had been planned - but for Thursday rather than Wednesday.[161] Perhaps this explains the "stewards" marshalling "the crowd with wonderful control", observed by the New Age correspondent.[162] Another indication of preparatory work was that the marchers were not only from Langa; a contingent from Nyanga also began the long journey into Cape Town - though somewhat later in the day.[163] According to eye-witnesses the mood of the crowd was peaceful, "almost joyful"[164] and they marched in total silence.[165]

Whatever plans had been made beforehand, the PAC leaders were taken aback when it began. Kgosana admits that when he first heard the men were marching he was in bed and he had to be given a lift by an American reporter to get to the head of the procession. He caught up with the marchers as they came to the Athlone-Pinelands railway line, asked them why they were marching and was told it was to protest to the police in Caledon Square about the attacks of the morning. Kgosana then suggested that the objective should not be Caledon Square but the Houses of Parliament where they could find the Minister of Justice.[166]

This was agreed upon but in the event the march upon Parliament was called off.[167] Afterwards there were those who argued that had the marchers stuck to their decision the day would have ended differently. But had Parliament been besieged would the Government's resolve to continue have been broken? This is very doubtful and in any event the mood of the crowd was hardly likely to provoke a confrontation. Kgosana, after all, continues to insist on the limited objective of the march and the campaign in general.

> I think we did our best to demonstrate our opposition to white domination and oppression. We were shot at, we never fired back, we never killed a soul. 168

The march ended, therefore, at Caledon Square. Thousands of people joined the procession at Mowbray railway station and the procession then took the De Waal Drive route into the city. The choice of route is significant: Kgosana was anxious not to disrupt traffic.[169] Again this makes nonsense of the claim that the situation had a revolutionary potential. One witness remembers that the line of marchers good-humouredly made way for cars containing whites. At an early stage of the march a Liberal Party member had tried to persuade Kgosana not to take the procession to Parliament - the police reaction, she insisted would be too ruthless.[170] Kgosana refused to reassure her, saying the matter was out of his hands. But when he was confronted by Detective Head Constable Sauerman at the Rowland/ Buitenkant streets intersection he agreed after some discussion to alter the destination of the marchers.[171]

The next decision was the most controversial. Kgosana had another meeting with Terblanche when he reached the police

station and again he agreed to send the marchers home - this time in return for a promise of an appointment with the Minister of Justice, at Caledon Square at 5.00 p.m. that day. Janet Robertson states that Liberals persuaded Kgosana to disperse his men and praises them for doing so.[171] Writers less sympathetic to Liberals see this as a betrayal, suggesting that they persuaded Kgosana to negotiate and turn back the men, and were thus instrumental in the surrendering of Kgosana's power.[173] But the overwhelming weight of evidence suggests that no Liberals, and especially not Patrick Duncan, were involved on this occasion. Kgosana cannot remember Duncan or any other Liberal being present during the negotiations.[174] Duncan's diary does not mention any involvement - and as he publicly praised Kgosana's actions that day, it is unlikely that he would have failed to record any part he had played in directly influencing them.[175] Collingwood August remembers Liberals meeting in "secret conclave" in their office building but he does not mention any contact between them and Kgosana.[176] Hjul insists that Duncan was not at Caledon Square. Nor does Terblanche mention Duncan in his version of the meeting. Today the Colonel claims that he was ignorant of Kgosana's identity.[177]

There was a similarity in the pattern of events on March 25 and March 30, and indeed on the latter occasion, when the decision to turn back became known amongst those at the back of the crowd the rumour began to circulate that Kgosana had been swayed by Duncan and Terblanche.[178]

Liberals advised PAC men that Kgosana should not keep his appointment.[179] But Kgosana turned up at Caledon Square and

was arrested. He never did see J. M. Erasmus.[180] Finally after ten days of indecision, the Government reacted. Cordons were thrown around Langa. Not enough police or military units were locally available and sailors and soldiers were flown in.[181] The cordon could only be extended to Nyanga three days later,[182] but from the moment Langa was sealed off, black Cape Town had lost the struggle.

Despite these events both Hjul and Duncan believed that their faith in Terblanche had been justified and that Terblanche had been overruled by the Union police chief, General Rademeyer and the Government.[183] But Terblanche said later that he was so afraid that the blacks would try and release their leaders that he himself asked the army to put cordons around Langa.[184] It could be argued that although the Contact group wanted the PAC strong, and that some of their actions helped towards strengthening it (the food deliveries, Duncan's part in persuading Terblanche to suspend pass laws), their advice lost the strong negotiating position which the Cape Town PAC had temporarily won. Whatever the marchers might have achieved by staying in Cape Town that day, one thing is certain: they lost everything by going home. Liberals had, by contributing to the creation of an "understanding" between the PAC leaders and the police chief, strenghened the impression that the police were to be trusted, and that Terblanche would act in good faith. All along they had sought to eliminate tension, to remove any possibility of violence. Duncan was even prepared to defend the forces of law and order:

> Today a State of Emergency was declared. In my view the Government was compelled to do this, and I defended their moderation (up to date) in dealing with the Cape Town situation. 185

Moreover the Contact group had contributed to Kgosana's isolation from his followers. They had seen him as the key man, as the young messiah. Kgosana did have a hold on his followers, but, when he should have been with them, sharing their feelings, assessing their strength, working out a strategy of resistance, sensing the extent of their will to resist, he was elsewhere being interviewed and advised by well-intentioned whites. One has a feeling that throughout the crisis there was a four-cornered relationship: the police chiefs, the Contact Liberals, the Kgosana group and finally the people of Langa and Nyanga. It was these last who had least say in the decisions.

Resistance continued for over a week. By April 2 both townships were cordoned off by Navy, Army and Police units. Before Nyanga was totally surrounded 1,000 men were prevented from marching on Cape Town.[186] As tension showed no signs of ebbing the Government mobilized the reserves.[187] On Tuesday, April 4, the police moved, determined to break the strike. Liberals had been forbidden to bring in any more food the day before. Men were beaten without restraint on the streets of Langa. On April 7 the suspension of pass laws was revoked and the situation in Langa was "normal" enough for the cordon to be lifted. However the men surrounding Nyanga needed reinforcing. By now PAC leaders who were un-arrested and many of the Liberals who had been involved were lying low.[188] It took the police four days of continuous brutality to break the strike. They used sticks, batons, crow bars, guns and Saracen armoured cars to comb the townships and force the men back to work. On Wedesday, April 6, PAC men in Nyanga told foreign

journalists that the strike would go on until Sobukwe gave the word. The next day the police took the location by storm, arresting 1,500 people and detaining 250.[189] By the following Monday the strike was virtually over. For nearly three weeks the people of the Cape Town locations had presented the biggest challenge that had faced the South African government since the Defiance Campaign in 1952.

As resistance gathered impetus in Cape Town and reached its apogee on March 30, elsewhere in the country an upsurge of protest began to assume national dimensions. On Thursday, March 24, Chief Lutuli, responding to a suggestion by a Drum journalist,[190] called for Monday, March 28, to be observed as a Day of Mourning with a worker stay-at-home. At the same time the ANC executive, anticipating the suppression of the Congresses, decided to send an ANC representative abroad: Oliver Tambo was chosen and was driven from Cape Town to Bechuanaland by Ronald Segal, the editor of Africa South. Tambo was on a brief visit to Cape Town at the time to help co-ordinate local ANC responses to the PAC campaign. On Sunday Chief Lutuli, then in Pretoria giving evidence in the Treason Trial and staying with the branch chairman of the Liberal Party, burnt his pass.

The next day response to the ANC strike call was almost total amongst Africans in many large towns. The stay-away was 90 per cent effective in Johannesburg and similarly successful in Port Elizabeth and Durban. In Port Elizabeth the local PAC men circulated a leaflet telling people to ignore the ANC protest; this conflicted with a message, apparently smuggled out of prison from Sobukwe and publicised by the acting leader of the PAC in Johannesburg, William Jolobe, which advocated a

week long strike.[191] On the Rand participation in the protest was facilitated by employers who allowed their workers to do double shifts on Saturday to make up for the wages they would lose on Monday.[192]

Despite the ANC's insistence on the peaceful conduct of the stay-away, in the late afternoon of the 28th violence broke out in many parts of Soweto as "tsotsi" gangs attacked homecoming workers who had ignored the strike call. Large groups of teen-agers gathered outside the railway stations and manned road blocks to stone alighting passengers. Municipal buildings were set alight and the Rediffusion radio system's wiring ripped out. As the Tsotsis' attacks continued into the night the railway service was suspended the remaining commuters spending an uncomfortable night on the platforms of Johannesburg railway station.[193] Meanwhile small groups of ANC supporters stood in streets and backyards and lit small fires in which they burnt their passes. Similar demonstrations were organised by the ANC during the next few days in other centres.

The final eruption took place in Durban. On March 31 and April 1 huge processions attempted to march from Cato Manor by various routes through Durban's suburbs to the centre of the city. On both occasions the marchers were intercepted by police and driven back to the accompaniment of shooting by white civilian onlookers. One group of 1,000 people succeeded in getting through the police cordon and marched through Durban's shopping area to end up outside the central gaol demanding the release of ANC men detained on March 30. Unrest continued in Durban over the next week or so as ANC activists tried to mount a ten day stay-at-home which was fiercely contested by the

authorities. Interestingly the main support for the strike came from the migrant hostel dwellers rather than the inhabitants of the municipal townships.[194]

The Sharpeville crisis has been viewed as an historical moment when, to quote R. W. Johnson, extraordinary chances were missed, when:

> All over rural South Africa small and even medium-sized towns were suddenly denuded of their police, who were rushed to the urban centres. In almost no case did local Africans attempt to exploit the vacuum thus created in the countryside. [195]

Leaving aside for the moment the question of neglected opportunities, could the occasion when the authorities were confronted with the greatest potential threat, a defiant African crowd capable of occupying the central institutions of the state, have been exploited by African politicians to better effect? There were obvious flaws in the leadership provided by the PAC. Its strategic vagueness hardly prepared its followers for the inevitable confrontations with the police provoked by the campaign. Insistence on tactical non-violence ducked the issue of how to respond to the use or threat of violence by the authorities. There was also the organisational inexperience of many key men within the movement: in the case of Philip Kgosana this contributed to his dependence on the Liberals and in consequence the degree of influence, direct and indirect, Patrick Duncan had on his behaviour on both occasions at Caledon Square. The lack of involvement in activist politics during the 1950s of the Soweto leaders may have helped to reduce the potential impact the campaign had in Johannesburg. The failure to effectively picket public transport terminals in the

Johannesburg townships was especially neglectful. The impromptu action of teenage gangs one week later is an indication of one constituency which the PAC omitted to identify and harness.[196]

Possibly, had Kgosana refused to disperse his followers at Caledon Square, more significant and long lasting concessions could have been negotiated. This has been argued by the social anthropologist, John Blacking:

> Kgosana invoked the traditional idea of a peaceful protest in which the numerical strength of people and their implied threat of non-cooperation should have been sufficient to produce a just response; but he did not follow the idea through by waiting patiently until their demands had been satisfied, as did, for example, a famous Venda chief and his followers, who surrounded the Government's administrative offices with an orchestra of over three hundred reed-pipes and accompanying drums, and also the followers of a head women who resisted another Chief's autocratic attempt to replace her with a favoured rival . . . his fault was rather that in dealing with whites, he invoked the idealized knowledge of European thought and society that he had learnt at school and university . . . rather than following the logic of traditional African politics which had started the march and moving no further than he could see clearly. 197

In this context it is interesting that Colonel Terblanche claims that:

> I could not see my way clear to using force in the heart of Cape Town . . . I was determined to find a peaceful solution and I was prepared to stand there and argue for days if necessary to avoid bloodshed. 198

With better organisation the PAC might have succeeded in mobilising a larger following on the Rand. But it is unlikely that much more would have been achieved. Unarmed demonstrations, however large, were a poor match for aggressive and well-armed

police. The main thrust of the PAC campaign developed within the townships: here revolt was easiest to control and suppress. Many urban Africans still thought in terms of protest rather than resistance - the double shifts worked on Saturday, March 26, were a telling instance of this - so revolt was in any case, outside Cape Town and Cato Manor at least, unlikely. Johnson's suggestion that while the State was concentrating its resources on securing control over the main urban centres, African nationalists should have unleashed rebellion in the smaller towns and the countryside overestimates the real extent to which the power of the administration was challenged. As one contemporary analysis pointed out, during the Sharpeville crisis 18,000 people were arrested in the countryside for normal legal infringements.[199] It also ignores the way that the nationalist movement had developed during the 1950s: this derived much of its strength from urban concentrations of industrial workers and both ideologically and in terms of its structure was scarcely a revolutionary force.

The significance of the Sharpeville crisis was not that it was an occasion when revolutionary political and social conditions were present and consequently squandered. Instead it represented a turning point in the history of African politics, when protest finally hardened into resistance, and when African politicians were forced to begin thinking in terms of a revolutionary strategy. But this shift in their perception of their role was derived not so much from an accurate reappraisal of the strength and inadvisability of white South Africa as it successfully contained the challenge presented by African political movements,

but rather from an illusion of its vulnerability. They were not alone in believing in the possibility of imminent political change. In the wake of the Sharpeville shootings there was a massive withdrawal of investors' confidence giving rise to a short-term business slump and a cabinet minister was to call for reforms in government policies affecting Africans.[200] The sense of crisis generated by the Sharpeville shootings and their aftermath appeared to be a vindication of advocacy of armed insurgency.

Chapter Three - Notes and References

1. South African Institute of Race Relations Papers, AD 1189, ANC unsorted box, Anti-Pass Planning Council Plan.

2. In June 1959 riots broke out in the Durban shanty town of Cato Manor as women marched on the municipal beer halls in protest against restrictions against home brewing. The unrest spread to the countryside where women had recently been adversely affected by a new system of land allocation as well as stock control measures. From July to September a total of 20,000 women participated in a series of violent protests and demonstrations affecting the majority of the southern Natal reserves. For analysis of these events see: Joanne Yawich, 'Natal 1959: the women's riots', Africa Perspective (Johannesburg), 5 (1977), pp. 1-16.

3. Rand Daily Mail, 25 July 1960 and 19 February 1960.

4. Presidential address in the Annual Report of National Executive Committee of the ANC, 1959, SAIRR Papers, AD 1189, Box II, File 3.

5. Ibid.

6. Michael Harmel, 'Revolutions are not abnormal', Africa South (Cape Town), January March, 1959.

7. Albert Lutuli, 'What June 26th means to African people', New Age, 27 June 1957.

8. Africanists had been involved in the leadership of two recent bus boycotts, both of which were according considerable press publicity during their occurrence. See: Tom Lodge, 'We are being punished because we are poor: the bus boycotts of Evaton and Alexandra, 1955-1957', Volume 2, Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1981, pp. 258-303.

9. Sobukwe's instructions were obeyed: no women did take part in the campaign (The World (Johannesburg), 23 April 1960). In the context of a period when women's protests against the implementation of pass laws had been one of the most massive sustained struggles in the history of African resistance in South Africa this interdict was strikingly unimaginative. As well as illustrating a somewhat conservative conception of the public domain of women it serves to demonstrate just how introspective and insular the Soweto-based PAC leadership was: thirty miles away in Pretoria's Lady Selbourne township an Africanist faction had created a following through encouraging militant female protest against the pass laws (see Chapter 6). Women throughout the 1950s had consistently demonstrated their eagerness to contest the pass laws. The PAC's disregard of this in forbidding women an activist function in the campaign reflected their own lack of activist political experience outside the field of sectarian conflict.

10. Gail Gerhart, Black Power in South Africa, University of California Press, Berkerley, 1978, p. 220; CAMP microfilm collection, Regina vs. Sobukwe and 22 others, 1960, trial transcript, p. 510.

11. Regina vs. Sobukwe and 22 others, police evidence.

12. Ibid.

13. Jordan Ngubane, 'I shall not be silenced', unpublished autobiographical manuscript. It was certainly the case that the PAC was in touch with representatives of the Ghanian government. A letter has been preserved dated 28th October 1959 from P. K. Leballo to A. K. Barden of the Accra Bureau of African Affairs. The letter concerns the activities of an 'imperialist paid agent', Maurice Hommel. Microfilm held at School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, M749.

14. See Lodge, op. cit., pp. 261-280. Madzunya is still alive, at the age of 74 back in his native Sibasa to which he was banished in the 1960s, now, ironically, working for a local bus company. He still wears the same double-breasted black woollen overcoat though his beard is now white. David Capel, 'The 'Black Verwoerd' is still in the fight', Rand Daily Mail, 17 February 1984.

15. The World, 9 January 1960.

16. Gerhart, op. cit., p. 234.

17. Rand Daily Mail, 25 July 1960 and 19 February 1960.

18. Ken Luckhardt and Brenda Wall, Organize or Starve, the history of SACTU, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1980, pp. 381-388. Jacob D. Nyaose, A report on two interviews, conducted by Baruch Hirson, Geneva, July 1976. Pan-Africanist Bulletin, no. 1, 1959, claims 17,000 workers as belonging to FOFATUSA affiliates.

19. Regina vs. Sobukwe and 22 others, p. 44.

20. Hannah Stanton, Go Well, Stay Well, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1961, 197.

21. Cape Times (Cape Town), 16 May 1960.

22. F. H. C. Dixon, The Story of Sharpeville, Vereeniging Town Engineer's Department, n. d. mimeo.

23. R. L. Leigh, Vereeniging: South Africa, 1892-1967, Courier-Gazette Publishers, Johannesburg, 1968; Van der Bijl Park Publicity Association, Van der Bijl Park, 21 Years of Progress, Felstar Publications, Johannesburg, 1964.

24. Dixon, op. cit.

25. Ibid.

26. Vereeniging Town Council, Town Engineer's Department, Memorandum on Housing and other facilities for Non-Europeans at Vereeniging, 1951, mimeo.

27. Republic of South Africa, Population Census, 6 September 1960, Volume 2, no. II, Report on the Vereeniging Area, Bureau of Statistics, 1964.

28. Sharpeville Advisory Board minutes, 28 October 1953, 24 November 1955, 26 May 1958, Town Clerk's Office, Vereeniging, Non European Affairs, 130/5/4.

29. Old Location Advisory Board minutes, 24 April 1950, Town Clerk's Office, Vereeniging.

30. The Society of Young Africa was an affiliate of the All African Convention. It tended to function more as a discussion group than as a political organisation and was fashionable in the early 1950s among young and comparatively educated people in the Reef townships.

31. The Torch (Cape Town), 8 July 1952 and 9 September 1952. The only events of the Defiance Campaign which touched Vereeniging were four attempts by Rand-based volunteer batches to enter Sharpeville location without a permit. There were no local participants.

32. Sharpeville Advisory Board minutes, 18 May 1953.

33. Vereeniging and Vanderbijlpark News, 10 October 1958.

34. Text of an interview with Joe Matthews, 1963, Karis and Carter microfilm, Reel 9a, 2 XM 61.

35. Republic of South Africa, Population Census, 1960, ii, II.

36. Vereeniging Town Council, Non European Affairs Committee, minute book, November 1959-July 1960, Report of the Town Clerk to special meeting, 22 September 1960.

37. Union of South Africa, Summary of the Commission of Enquiry into the Events which occurred in the Districts of Vereeniging and Vanderbijlpark, mimeo, 1960, p. 20.

38. Vereeniging and Vanderbijlpark News, 24 April 1959.

39. Ibid., 10 October 1958.

40. Ibid., 13 February 1959.

41. The World, 26 March 1960.

42. Statistics from the Town Clerk's reports to the Non-European Affairs Committee, minute book, November 1958-October 1959.

43. Minutes of Non-European Affairs Committee, 12 January 1959.

44. New Age, 24 March 1960.

45. New Age, 24 March 1960, and The Star (Johannesburg), 8 March 1960.

46. Minutes of the Non-European Affairs Committee, 14 March 1960.

47. Town Clerk's reports to the Non-European Affairs Committee, minute book, November 1959-July 1960.

48. They had participated in the leadership of a successful bus boycott between July 1955 and August 1956. The presence of Africanists in Evaton can be attributed possibly to the proximity of the prestigious Wilberforce Institute. This school was during the 1950s under the headmastership of Victor Sifora, 'Black Savage' in the columns of The Africanist. His ascendency at Wilbeforce may have attracted other teachers with Africanist sympathies to work there. Source: Karis and Carter microfilm, Reel 14a, 2X5 24 96/2.

49. Transcript of the Commission of Enquiry into the Events which occurred in Districts of Vereeniging and Vanderbijlpark, 21 March 1960 (copy held at the University of York Library), p. 429.

50. Ibid., pp. 425 and 2688.

51. Ibid., p. 430.

52. Ibid., p. 2469.

53. Ibid., pp. 2049-2503.

54. Ibid., p. 1933.

55. Ibid., p. 1916.

56. Ibid., p. 1255.

57. The Commission of Enquiry's findings were never properly published though a summary of its main conclusions was produced. The Commissioner accepted the veracity of police testimony on the hostile and aggressive behaviour of the crowd, despite, the weight of evidence to the contrary submitted by other witnesses. Bishop Ambrose Reeve's Shooting at Sharpeville, Victor Gollancz, London, 1960, based on Commission evidence and cross examination, is an impressive refutation of police testimony.

58. Vereeniging and Vanderbijlpark News, 25 March 1960 and Rand Daily Mail, 29 March 1960.

59. The best analysis of Duncan's personality is in C. J. Driver, Patrick Duncan: South African and Pan African, Heinemann, London, 1980.

60. Robert Sobukwe, 'The Africanist Case', Contact (Cape Town), 30 May 1959.

61. The World, 25 September 1959; Die Burger (Cape Town), 2 May 1959.

62. Author's interview with Peter Hjul, London, 1976.

63. Author's interview with Marion Friedman, London, 1976.

64. These figures are drawn from Michael Hubbard, African Poverty in Cape Town, SAIRR, Johannesburg, 1970.

65. Sheila Van der Horst, African Workers in Cape Town, Oxford University Press, Cape Town, 1964, p. 33.

66. House of Assembly Debates, 30 March 1962.

67. Hubbard, op. cit., p. 7.

68. Conditions in a Cape Town squatter camp (unfortunately not one at Windermere) are described in 'Living Conditions in a Squatter Camp', Race Relations Journal, Vol. XXI, no. 3, 1954.

69. Hubbard, op. cit., appendix A and Monica Wilson and Archie Mafeje, Langa, Oxford University Press, Cape Town, 1963, p. 16.

70. See Wilson and Mafeje, op. cit., p. 15.

71. Ibid.

72. Ibid., p. 16.

73. L. B. Lee Warden, 'Crime of Langa', Africa South, April-June, 1957, p. 51.

74. See for example a report in The Torch (Cape Town), 21 October 1958, of a meeting held in Langa to discuss the implementation of the rehabilitation scheme in the Transkei.

75. Cape Times, 28 November 1959.

76. For conditions in Nyanga see Phyllis Ntantala, 'African tragedy', Africa South, April-June 1957, p. 61 and Contact, 20 September 1959, p. 12.

77. Cape Times, 29 August 1959 and 12 September 1959.

78. Contact, 29 September 1959, p. 12.

79. Wilson and Mafeje, op. cit., p. 3.

80. Gwendoline Carter, Thomas Karis and Gail Gerhart, From Protest to Challenge, Hoover Institution Press, Stanford, 1977, p. 690.

81. Mary Bneson, The Struggle for a Birthright, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1966, p. 206.

82. Regina vs. Synod Madlebe and 31 others, Case no. 313/1960, Albie Sachs papers, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London, File 31/1, p. A108.

83. Ibid., p. A25.

84. Records exist for the Nyanga and Kensington groups.

85. Regina vs. Synod Madlebe, list of accused, 31/11.

86. Karis and Carter microfilm, Reel 6b, 2 DP1 8911, PAC Secretary's minutes, Kensington, entry for 10 March 1960.

87. Ibid., entry for 31 October 1959.

88. Ibid., entry for 22 February 1960.

89. Ibid., entry for 7 July 1959.

90. Regina vs. Synod Madlebe, statements by the accused, 31/3.

91. Kensington PAC Secretary's minutes, entry for 23 November 1959. Other branch strengths were as follows: Crawford, 42; Nyanga, 102; Langa Flats, 90; Langa, 61.

92. Kensington PAC Secretary's minutes, entry for 7 July 1959.

93. Ibid., entry for 17 January 1960.

94. Karis and Carter microfilm, Reel IIa, 2 XKG 77, Philip Kgosana unpublished ts. autobiography, p. 158.

95. Ibid.

96. Kensington PAC Secretary's minute book, entry for 29 February 1960.

97. Mqhayi, chief of the western amaNdlambe, 1828-1858; Hintsa, chief of the Gcaleka, 1804-1835; Makana (Nxele), Xhosa diviner and general in the Fifth Frontier War, 1818-1819.

Regina vs. Synod Madlebe, police transcripts of speeches, File 31/6.

98. Ibid., speech by P. Bomali, 6 March 1960, Nyanga West.

99. Kgosana in his autobiography noted: 'In Cape Town we incalcated a new spirit in the people. They had to renew their contact with the African God and our ancestors. We believed, as we still believe now, that we were oppressed largely because we had deserted our customs, our traditions and our gods. Kgosana, op. cit., p. 160. Qamata is an Xhosa term for a supreme deity. Regina vs. Synod Madlebe, File 31/6.

100. Philip Kgosana, 'The story of my exciting life', Drum, February 1961.

101. The World, 19 January 1957.

102. Author's interview with Randolph Vigne, London, 1975. It was Vigne and Joe Nkatlo who were chiefly responsible for creating good relations with the PAC in Cape Town before the campaign. See Joe Nkatlo's letter to the author, 20 July 1976.

103. This figure is also cited by Kgosana in his letter to the author.

104. Philip Kgosana, '30,000 obeyed me as one man', Drum, March 1961.

105. Ibid.

106. Ibid.

107. Union of South Africa, Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Events at Langa location, 21 March 1960, typescript, 14 July 1960, (henceforth Langa Commission Report).

108. Cape Times, 12 May 1960. At Worcester PAC speakers were able to capitalise on recent riots which had occurred after the banishment of a local trade unionist, Elizabeth Mafikeng. See transcript of Elliot Magwentshu's speech at Worcester - 'We have been shot by police at Worcester' in Regina vs. Synod Madlebe, File 31/6/19.

109. Murial Horrell, Days of Crisis in South Africa, SAIRR, Johannesburg, 1960.

110. Patrick Duncan papers, University of York, DU 8 71 6, Collingwood August's diary, entry for 19 March 1960.

111. Langa Commission Report, p. 29.

112. Kgosana, op. cit.

113. Kgosana, autobiography, p. 163.

114. Estimates of the size of the crowd vary between 3,000 in the Langa Commission Report and the 6,000 generally mentioned in press reports.

115. Kgosana denied saying this but Ndlovu and Magwentshu of the PAC confirmed this version of his speech. See Langa Commission Report, pp. 39-40.

116. Langa Commission Report: Cape Times, 5 May 1960 and 13 May 1960; Contact, 2 April 1960 and 16 April 1960.

117. Collingwood August's diary, entry for 21 March 1960.

118. Cape Times, 22 March 1960.

119. Kgosana, '30,000 obeyed me . . . '.

120. Ibid.

121. Patrick Duncan papers, University of York, DU 8 71 5, Patrick Duncan's diary.

122. Associated Negro Press Bulletin, Chicago, 19 July 1969.

123. Kgosana's letter to the author, November 1975.

124. Kgosana, autobiography.

125. Author's interview with Peter Hjul, London, 1976.

126. Contact, 19 March 1960, p. 2.

127. Duncan's diary, August's diary and Peter Hjul's recollections.

128. Lewis Nkosi, Home and Exile, Longmans, London, 1965.

129. The churches belonged to the Bantu Methodists, the Dutch Reformed Church, the Order of the Ethiopianists, and the Apostolics. Mafeje argues that these represented 'symbols of respectability and collaborationist praxis . . . It was obvious who the targets were, the educated black Christian middle class'. The arsonists were young 'townees', customary foes of the 'decent people'. Archie Mafeje, 'Religion, Class and Ideology in South Africa' in Michael Whisson and Martin West, Religion and Social Change in South Africa, David Philip, Cape Town, 1975, p. 176. See also Wilson and Mafeje, op. cit., p. 102.

130. Langa Commission Report, p. 112.

131. Cape Argus, 20 May 1960.

132. Kgosana's letter to author, November 1975.

133. Patrick Duncan's diary.

134. Collingwood August's diary, entry for 22 March 1960.

135. Author's interview with Randolph Vigne.

136. Natal Mercury (Durban), 12 May 1960.

137. Patrick Duncan's diary, entry for 24 March 1960.

138. Contact, 16 April 1960.

139. Patrick Duncan's diary, entry for 23 March 1960.

140. Author's interview with Brian Bunting, London, 1975.

141. Regina vs. Synod Madlebe, p. A550.

142. Patrick Duncan's diary, entry for 25 March 1960.

143. Kgosana in Drum, March 1961; Associated Negro Press Bulletin, 19 July 1963; Philip Kgosana's letter to the author, November 1975.

144. Contact, 16 April 1960, p. 3.

145. Regina vs. Synod Madlebe, pp. A480-481.

146. Contact, 16 April 1960, p. 8.

147. Associated Negro Press Bulletin, 19 July 1963; Kgosana's letter to the author.

148. Cape Times, 12 May 1960.

149. Patrick Duncan's diary, entry for 26 March 1960.

150. The Star, 28 March 1963.

151. Patrick Duncan's diary, entry for 28 March 1960.

152. August's and Duncan's diaries, entries for 28 March 1960.

153. Kgosana in Drum, March 1961.

154. Cape Times, 29 March 1960.

155. Patrick Duncan's diary, entry for 28 March 1960.

156. Contact, 16 April 1960, p. 8.

157. Cape Times, 29 March 1960.

158. August's and Duncan's diary, entry for 30 March 1960.

159. Patrick Duncan's diary, entry for 30 March 1960. Entry records conversation with a journalist.

160. Cape Argus, 20 May 1960.

161. Patrick Duncan's diary, entry for March 1960.

162. New Age, 8 September 1960.

163. Patrick Duncan's diary, entry for 30 March 1960.

164. Contact, 16 April 1960; Author's interviews with eyewitnesses, Cape Town and London, 1975 and 1976.

165. Author's interview with Jean Naidoo, Cape Town, 1976.

166. Kgosana in Drum, March 1961.

167. Sauerman's description of this meeting in his court testimony: 'I met you and I spoke to you first. I said to you that there will be a crowd of people gathered at the police station and that they were not willing to disperse before they had seen their leaders and that you'd better come down and speak to them with the object of getting them dispersed. You then said to me that you were on your way to the House of Parliament to see the Minister. I advised you against that and said, No, you first must come down to the police station with me. Then you continued and you said that you will come with me but you insist on seeing the Minister as your people refuse to carry passes in the future and that you want the Minister to abolish the pass laws. Regina vs. Synod Madlebe, p. A510.

168. Kgosana's letter to the author, 1975.

169. Kgosana in Drum, March 1961.

170. Author's interview with Eulalia Stott, Cape Town, 1976.

171. Kgosana in Drum, March 1961.

172. Janet Robertson, Liberalism in South Africa, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1971, p. 216.

173. R. W. Johnson, How Long will South Africa Survive? Macmillan, Johannesburg, 1977, p. 19; Martin Legassick, 'Liberalism and social control in South Africa', unpublished seminar paper; Non-European Unity Movement, The Pan-Africanist Congress Venture in Retrospect, Cape Town, 1960; National Union of South African Students, Dissension in the ranks: white opposition in South Africa, Cape Town, 1981, p. 11.

174. Philip Kgosana's letter to the author, November 1975.

175. Patrick Duncan, 'Fortune favours the brave', Contact, 2 April 1960, p. 6.

176. Collingwood August's diary, entry for 30 March 1960.

177. 'The man who stopped bloodbath is 80', Cape Times, 3 February 1983.

178. Author's interview with Jean Naidoo, Cape Town, 1976.

179. Author's interview with Peter Hjul, London, 1976.

180. Instead, on April 31, Kgosana had a brief and futile conversation, with the Minister's secretary, Mr. Greef. See Philip Kgosana, 'How I got there and why', Drum, April 1961. Terblanche's subsequent career was damaged as a result of his undertaking to Kgosana. Promotion to which he was entitled was withheld after a disagreement with the Minister over the events of March 30 1960. See 'The man who stopped a bloodbath is 80', Cape Times, 3 February 1983.

181. Anon., 'The Nineteen Days', Africa South, July 1960, p. 1960, p. 16.

182. Collingwood August's diary, entry for 2 April 1960.

183. Author's interview with Peter Hjul, London, 1976.

184. I. P. S. Terblanche, 'Die Wonderwerk van 30 Maart 1960', Die Huisgenoot, 14 April 1961.

185. Patrick Duncan's diary, 30 March 1960.

186. Horrell, op. cit., p. 16.

187. Union of South Africa, Government Gazette, 2 April 1960.

188. Collingwood August's diary, 7 April 1960.

189. Anon., 'The Nineteen Days', p. 18.

190. Tom Hopkinson, In the Fiery Continent, Victor Gollancz, London, 1962, pp. 263-264.

191. Norman Phillips, The Tragedy of Apartheid, David McKay, New York, 1960, p. 63.

192. Rand Daily Mail, 28 March 1960.

193. Phillips, op. cit., pp. 31-37; Rand Daily Mail, 29 March 1960.

194. Horrell, op. cit.

195. R. W. Johnson, op. cit., p. 19.

196. The PAC condemned the 'tsotsi' violence in a press statement issued by William Jolobe dated 29 March 1960.

197. John Blacking, 'The power of ideas in social change: the growth of the Africanist idea in South Africa', David Riches (ed.), The Queens University Papers in Social Anthropology, Volume III, Belfast, 1979, p. 127.

198. Cape Times, 3 February 1983.

199. Socialist League of Africa, 'South Africa: Ten years of the Stay at Home', International Socialism (London), 5 (Summer 1961), p. 12.

200. Bernard Sachs, The Road to Sharpeville, Dial Press, Johannesburg, 1962, p. 49.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE POQO INSURRECTION, 1961-1968

This chapter provides a narrative of the Pan-Africanist Congress's development inside South Africa between 1960 and 1967. It outlines the extent of the organisation's support, as well as offering some generalisations about the PAC's sociological character in the different regions where it had influence. The chronology is needed for two reasons. First, the very detailed local studies which follow in later chapters should be understood in the light of a more general historical context. Secondly, there are no studies which examine this phase of the PAC's development in any depth. Gail M. Gerhart's Black Power in South Africa, the most detailed and lengthy treatment of the PAC, devotes less than two pages[1] to a description of the 'Poqo' movement and this perfunctoriness is characteristic of the relevant secondary literature.[2] Some of the historiographical issues which arise from the analysis of this movement are discussed in the conclusion to this chapter.

After the Sharpeville crisis and a confused period during which African politicians adjusted to new conditions of illegality a variety of insurgent organisations emerged. Of these the two most significant were those linked to the PAC and the African National Congress. These were both dedicated to revolutionary transformations of society and were both prepared to employ violent measures to attain this but there the similarity between them ended. The PAC-oriented 'Poqo' movement and the ANC's military wing 'Umkonto we Sizwe' reflected in

their divergent strategies the fundamental ideological and strategic differences which had led to the fission in African resistance politics in the 1950s. As well as this the PAC insurgents were very much more numerous than the Umkonto activists. Whilst the latter operated as an elite within the framework of a larger clandestine and sometimes less committed 'support organisation'[3] the Poqo insurgency in certain localities attained the dimensions of a mass movement. Reaching the peak of its influence in 1963, the Poqo movement was still capable three years later of inspiring violent conspiracies: in 1966 in the Eastern Cape alone, 85 men accused of PAC activity were convicted in six trials.[4] In terms of its geographical extensiveness, the numbers involved and its timespan, the Poqo conspiracies of 1962-1968 represent the largest and most sustained African insurrectionary movement since the inception of modern African political organisations in South Africa.

The word 'Poqo' is a Xhosa expression meaning 'alone' or 'pure'. The earliest known usage of the word in the context of a separatist organisation occurred when the Ethiopianist Church of South Africa was established. Its members would describe themselves as: 'Ndingum Topiya Poqo' (belonging to the Church of Ethiopia).[5] The word was used sometimes in the Western Cape in 1960 as a slogan by PAC members to describe the character of their organisation in contrast to the multiracial dimension of the Congress Alliance.[6] Leaflets allegedly circulated by PAC activists in Port Elizabeth in May 1961 opposing the ANC's call for a stay-away in protest against the governments' proclamation of a republic bore the legend: 'May demos a fraud, Poqo, Poqo,

Poqo'.[7] The authorities and the press tended to employ the term to describe all PAC-connected conspiracies though only PAC supporters in the Cape identified themselves as Poqo members at first. Here, for the sake of simplicity, the state's usage of the term will be followed, though, as will become clear, different regional concentrations of PAC/Poqo affinity had quite distinct social characteristics. The first moves towards the formation of a violent organisation came in the Western Cape and it is here that the narrative will begin.

The Western Cape, and in particular the Cape Peninsula, had been one of the areas of strongest support for the PAC. As we have seen this could be related to the particularly fierce effects of influx control in the Cape Peninsula, the 'repatriation' of women and children to the Transkei, the refusal of the authorities to construct adequate housing and sharply deteriorating living conditions. In addition, in the early 1960s the imposition of Bantu Authorities and land rehabilitation measures in the Transkei also influenced the political responses of Africans in the Cape Peninsula and its hinterland. The Pan-Africanist Congress's rhetorical militancy, the incorporation into its ideology of themes drawn from traditions of primary resistance, and the immediacy of its strategic objectives made it especially attractive to the increasingly large migrant worker population of Cape Town. The Pan Africanists found an important section of their following in the 'bachelor zones' of Langa.[8] However, of the thirty-one PAC leaders who were subsequently put on trial in Cape Town after the 1960 pass campaign, only seven men were from the migrant workers' hostels in Langa and Nyanga.

Unfortunately, the trial documentation only contains full details of the backgrounds of a few of the leaders: they included a herbalist, a dry cleaning examiner, a domestic servant, a university student, a tailor and a farmworker and their ages ranged from 22 to 55 (the majority of the accused were over thirty). At least seven were former members of the ANC and one had once belonged to the Communist Party.[9] The evidence suggests a not altogether surprising social pattern: a political movement with a large following amongst migrant workers, but with positions of responsibility held by men with at least some education, work skills and political experience.

During the 1960 pass campaign as well as before and after it, there was considerable contact between the local Pan Africanist leaders and members of the multiracial Liberal Party. This was despite frequent attacks on white radicals who had been associated with the Congress movement.[10] Local Liberals were seeking a mass base and though wary of the racialist undertones of Pan-Africanist ideology, they sympathised with and were attracted by the PAC's hostility to left wing influences within the Congress movement. Cape Town PAC leaders, whatever their private feelings about the Liberals, were glad to accept offers of assistance that appeared to be without strings, and allowed certain Liberals to play an important intermediary role between them and the authorities during the 1960 troubles in Cape Town. Whereas this relationship had certain advantages at the time, it did have the effect of isolating the leaders from rank and file membership, as well as the large informal following the campaign generated.[11]

In the months following the crisis of March-April 1960, this gulf between leaders and followers was to widen and take on a factional form. Some of the main leaders, including Philip Kgosana, jumped bail and left the country towards the end of 1960. This considerably weakened the degree of influence of those who remained. Accounts by two Cape Town journalists tell of a struggle in the Cape Town locations between moderates and extremists.[12] The 'extremists' identified the 'moderates' as those PAC men who had flirted with the Liberal Party. They were 'Kantangese, the treacherous ones who are playing the same role as Moishe Tshombe in the Congo'.[13] These accounts are substantiated by some of the trial evidence. In a trial of old age home workers two of the accused in their statements to the police (possibly made after they had been tortured) mentioned a dispute within the PAC in Cape Town. One group was led by two Nyanga leaders, both former members of the regional executive of the legal PAC, Christopher Mlokoti and Abel Matross.[14] Mlokoti and Matross were the PAC men who made the initial contact with the Liberal Party in late 1959.[15] The other faction was allegedly led by Mlami Makwetu and Wellington Tshongayi.[16] Makwetu had been branch secretary at Langa New Flats in 1960 and was a docker.[17] Tshongayi also belonged to the PAC in 1960 and was secretary of the Crawford branch. He was imprisoned after the pass campaign.[18] What the evidence suggests is a struggle for dominance of the underground movement in early 1961 between upper and lower eschelon leadership with the latter, by virtue of their stronger links with migrant hostel dwellers, becoming ascendent.

This split in the underground movement (which was accompanied by fighting between the different groups)[19] was followed by a period of extensive recruitment and organisation by the dominant faction. It seems that it was at this point that the 'cell system' was established.[20] Within Langa, and elsewhere in Cape Town, recruitment and organisation was often done by forming groups composed of men who had come from a particular rural region. Although this flowed naturally from a situation where migrant workers would often choose to live with friends or relatives from their homeplace, there was an element of self consciousness in the way it was done. For example in Langa, there was a special 'Lady Frere' group drawn from men who lived in Zones 19, 20, 23 and 24 of the Langa single men's quarters.[21] This would have obvious advantages when Poqo began to extend its influence into the Transkei.[22] It also meant that Poqo cell members would not only live in close proximity with each other, they would also probably be employed together.[23] Theoretically, each cell was composed of ten men: in fact they were often larger and in any case individual cells would combine for larger meetings often involving over a hundred people. Similarly large groups would sometimes accompany recruiters on their rounds.[24] Each cell would have a leader.

Langa seems to have been regarded by other Poqo groups as the local head-quarters of the movement: certainly it was recruiting teams from Langa who played the most active role in spreading the influence of the movement. There were recorded instances of Langa activists establishing cells or branches

in different parts of Cape Town. Men living in employers' compounds seem to have been a favourite target for recruiting operations: a Poqo group at the Cape Town Jewish Old Age Home also included workers from a nearby hotel. Another trial, which collapsed through lack of evidence, involved staff from the Brooklands Chest Hospital.[25] Poqo activists fanned out from Cape Town to the smaller urban centres and the farms surrounding them, either starting new cells or reactivating PAC branches. Considerable effort seems to have been devoted to building cells among farmworkers: according to state witness evidence in a trial involving a member of Tshongayi's cell, there was an unsuccessful meeting to recruit people on a farm near Somerset West in February 1961.[26] More successful in this context apparently was the establishment of a Poqo cell on a farm at Stellenbosch in October 1961 after a visit by three Poqo men from Cape Town.[27] A Poqo group was active between March 1962 and April 1963 on a farm in the Elgin District.[28]

Poqo's message was stated in simple direct terms. In December 1961 a leaflet in Xhosa was picked up in Nyanga. It read:

> We are starting again Africans . . . we die once. Africa will be free on January 1st. The white people shall suffer, the black people will rule. Freedom comes after bloodshed. Poqo has started. It needs a real man. The Youth has weapons so you need not be afraid. The PAC says this. 29

Sometimes the message was more specific: farmworkers were told that Poqo intended to take the land away from whites and give it to Africans.[30] Men in Wellington were told that one day they must throw away their passes and take over the houses of

the whites. All who did not join Poqo would be killed along 'with the white bosses'. Men in Paarl were told there was no need for whites; the factories and the industries would carry on as usual, for was it not the black people who worked in them?[31] Chiefs should be killed, for it was they who were responsible for the endorsement-out of Africans from the Western Cape.[32] Sometimes Poqo members giving evidence would repeat some of the old PAC slogans - from Cape to Cairo, from Morocco to Madagascar,[33] - but often witnesses would claim that they knew nothing of the ANC or PAC.[34] This may have been prompted by caution on their part, but what is noticeable is that many of the distinctive attributes of PAC speeches given at a popular level had disappeared: there were no references to Pan Africanism, communism or socialism and no careful clarifications of the movement's attitude with regard to the position of racial minorities. Ideological statements had been boiled down to a set of slogans: 'We must stand alone in our land';[35] 'Freedom - to stand alone and not be suppressed by whites';[36] 'amaAfrica Poqo'; 'Izwe Lethu' (our land). Poqo's lack of a 'political theory', the brutal simplicity of its catchphrases, the absence of any social programme save for the destruction of the present order and its replacement with its inversion in which white would be black, and black would be white, all this has helped to diminish its importance in the historiography of South African resistance movements. But because the slogans were simple does not mean that they were banal: they evoked a profound response from men who had been forced off the land, whose

families were being subjected to all forms of official harassment, as well as economic deprivation, who perceived every relationship with authority in terms of conflict: whether at the workplace, in the compound, or in the reserve. These were men who had no place to turn to. And hence the all-embracing nature of the movement's preoccupations, its social exclusiveness, and its urgency. The undertone of millinarianism, the concept of the sudden dawning of a juster era, the moral implications of the word 'poqo' (pure) - these are not surprising. For here was a group of men who were simultaneously conscious both of the destruction that was being wreaked upon their old social world, and the hopelessness of the terms being offered to them by the new order.

The strategy of a general uprising logically developed from this vision. The twenty one farmworkers of Stellenbosch put on trial in June 1962 were found guilty on a number of charges which included making preparations to attack a farm manager and his family, to burn the farm buildings and then to march to the town firing buildings on the way. For weapons the men sharpened old car springs into pangas.[37] The initiative for this strategy was probably a local one: most of the national PAC leadership was in prison in 1961 and early 1962 and had only fully regrouped in Maseru in August 1962.[38] But by late 1962, judging from the evidence of men involved in the Poqo attack at Paarl, Poqo members were conscious of a plan for a nationally co-ordinated insurrection, the directives for which would come from above.[39] In March 1963, Potlake Leballo, the PAC's acting president, told a journalist that he was in touch with Western Cape and other regional leaders.[40] Despite

this co-ordination of the Congress, there is a strong case for asserting that the insurrectionary impetus came initially from below and, as I have argued, can be directly related to the social situation of Poqo's local leaders and their followers. Certainly the violent impetus developed much earlier in PAC groups in the Western Cape than elsewhere, the first attacks on policemen or their informers beginning in Paarl in April 1961 and in Langa in April the following year. Before the end of 1962 several groups had travelled from the Langa migrant workers' quarters to the Transkei in efforts to kill the Emigrant Tembu paramount chief, Kaiser Mantazima and a full scale insurrection had taken place in the small Boland town of Paarl. These will be described and analysed in subsequent chapters.

While the Western Cape Poqo cells had an internal dynamic and momentum of their own, elsewhere the movement, more systematically structured and more heirarchical than in the Western Cape, was motivated less by local causes of social tension and more by the strategic conception of those members of the PAC's national executive who remained at liberty or who had been released from prison. Partly for this reason it was less effective. Initially, with most of the main leaders in prison there were few signs of PAC activity. With the end of the emergency in August 1960 some important PAC men who had been detailed along with Congress Alliance people were released. In particular, two Evaton leaders, both on the National Executive, were once again at liberty.[41] One of them, Z. B. Molete, was delegated the task of presiding over the underground organisation, while the other office-bearers were in prison and

he, together with Joe Molefi, began reviving branches.

The first indication of the re-establishment of an operating PAC leadership was the circulation of a typewritten leaflet in September in the Transkei with the heading 'A Call to PAC Leaders'. The leaflet instructed PAC branches to divide into smaller units, cells. Branch leaders were instructed to establish contact with the national and regional executives in Johannesburg. Finally, the leaflet exhorted PAC members to 'prepare for mass disciplined action', for a 'final decisive phase' with the object of 'total abolition of the pass laws'.[42] Obviously the leaflet's authors were still thinking of continuing the pre-Sharpeville strategy of mass civil disobedience. There was no explicit indication in the leaflet of the possibility of violence. That Molete and his colleagues did not at this stage share the insurrectionary disposition which was developing in the Cape is also indicated by their initial willingness to participate in the Orlando Consultative Conference of December 1961.[43]

The Orlando Conference was prompted by a suggestion from the Inter-dominational African Minister's Federation. Attending the meeting were representatives from the ANC and the PAC, as well as leading African members of the Liberal and Progressive Parties. At the insistence of PAC spokesmen whites and coloured were excluded.[44] After several speeches, including an address by Z. B. Molete on 'The Struggle against the Pass Laws'[45] the meeting resolved in favour of political unity, non-violent pressures against apartheid, non-racial democracy, and the calling of an 'All-in Conference representative of African people' to agitate for a national constitutional convention.

A continuation committee under the chairmanship of Jordan Ngubane, a former Youth Leaguer and a member of the Liberal Party, was elected.

The work of this continuation committee was soon overshadowed by conflict between the Liberals and the PAC on the one hand and the ANC on the other. Ngubane claimed that the ANC with financial assistance from the South African Communist Party worked to control the committee and the All-in Conference. Without consulting other committee members ANC people drafted publicity for the Conference to ensure its pro-Congress character.[46] Though Ngubane's accusations were probably somewhat exaggerated it is likely that neither the PAC nor the ANC had a particularly sincere concern for unity, not if this required making concessions to the other side. By mid-March the PAC men and Ngubane had resigned from the continuation committee and the All-in Conference held in Pietermaritzberg on the 25th and 26th March, was, despite the attendance of delegates from 140 organisations, a characteristically Congress affair. Among the 1,400 participants were whites, coloureds and Indians from the allied organisations. Traditional ANC rhetoric, songs and slogans predominated. The highlight of the event was the appearance of a recently unbanned Nelson Mandela, who made his first public speech since 1952. In his address Mandela announced the first phase of the campaign for a national convention which would take the form of a three-day stay-at-home, the last day of which would coincide with South Africa's proclamation of a republic on May 31st. Preparations for the strike would include an ultimatum to the Government to call a convention.

At the time of the Orlando Conference it seems likely that the PAC leaders at liberty did not have a very clear conception of the future role of their organisation. Hence their somewhat unrealistic adherence to the concept of a pass campaign which required forms of mobilisation unsuited to the operation of a clandestine movement. That they were initially willing to participate in the Orlando Conference and the continuation committee established in its wake was another indication of their confusion. Their withdrawal from the committee was prompted apparently by a message from their imprisoned colleagues brought to them by Matthew Nkoana, a national executive member who was released early as a result of his fine being paid.[47] Nkoana left prison with 'instructions to crush moves to unity'. Immediately he took the leadership out of the hands of Molete who, as he put it, was 'suffering from indecision' and rejected an initiative from Mandela to participate in the organisation of the anti-republic protest:

> 'I met Mandela at that time, he invited me to his house . . . in connection with these plans for the stay-at-home, but when we parted he was in no doubt as to where he stood, we didn't (indistinct) pre-1960 tactic of demonstration - if there had to be any action it had to take off from 1961 and not pre-1960 and a three day demonstration was really going back to pre-1960.' 48

Accordingly Nkoana devoted his energies to the production of a somewhat cerebral broadsheet, Mafube, which inter alia, outlined the reasons for opposing the strike. Bundles of them were despatched to surviving PAC officials in different centres.[49] In the case of the Cape Town branches it seems they were ignored: in the Duncan papers there is a statement signed by a Langa PAC

member which condemns the opposition to the stay-at-home and accuses the (coloured) Non European Unity Movement of distributing anti-strike leaflets in the PAC's name.[50] This may have been a reflection of the local rift which had at this stage developed: apparently in May 1961 an anonymous PAC official from Johannesburg visited Cape Town in an unsuccessful effort to unite the two factions.[51]

By July 1961 Nkoana's pamphleteering had come to the attention of the authorities and both he and Molete were arrested and subsequently accused of PAC activities. Both entreated bail (pending appeal against their sentences) and left the country in early 1962, Nkoana for Bechuanaland[52] and Molete joining the growing nucleus of PAC fugitives concentrated in Maseru. Before Nkoana's trial he visited Port Elizabeth and was most alarmed by what he witnessed there:

> I went to a meeting in the Eastern Cape where I felt those fellows . . . we had great difficulty in containing our followers. I was taken to address a public meeting - of a banned organisation: a public meeting! Hidden in the bushes. As we go there we had to be guided by scouts at regular intervals along the way, and then I addressed a public meeting. That's when I came back feeling that the PAC were going to be unable to control our chaps. Those were the rudiments of Poqo. 53

At some point between this visit in mid 1961 and early 1962 the PAC's leadership committed themselves to an insurrectionist strategy for in March 1962 a PAC leader for Johannesburg spoke to a meeting of the 'Task Force' in New Brighton chiding them for their lack of effort in recruitment and comparing them unfavourably with groups in Cape Town and East London who were 'ready for the fight' and who were just waiting 'until the

day Sobukwe is out of jail'.[54] No information is available on how and when this decision was made but it is unlikely that it involved much heartsearching: the PAC's previous strategy had been geared to an apocalyptic concept and Nkoana's concern had arisen from a concern for caution and discipline rather than any moral reservations about violence. What seems most likely is that the violent impulses which were beginning to be discernible in the Cape in early 1961 encouraged if not prompted the leaders to plan a general uprising.[55]

By late 1962 the headquarters of the movement had been transferred from its rather precarious situation on the Witwatersrand to Maseru. Potlake Leballo had arrived in August[56] and armed with the authority of a letter from Robert Sobukwe established a 'Presidential Council' with himself as Acting Chairman.[57] From this point preparations for a popular insurrection began in earnest. But before examining these let us first look at the nature and the scope of the PAC's organisation and support that had developed by the beginning of 1963.

There are two main sources of information on the size and location of the PAC's organisation. These are firstly the often grandiose claims made by the PAC leaders themselves and secondly the evidence emerging from court cases. The former provide a rather exaggerated impression of PAC strength, while in the case of the latter the evidence is incomplete. Despite the unsatisfactory quality of the evidence it is possible to reconstruct from it a picture of the surprisingly extensive network of PAC supporters.

PAC spokesmen in their claims about their organisation tended to depict it in terms of a formal bureaucratic hierarchy with clear lines of communication and control linking leaders with followers. In November 1962 Potlake Leballo stated in an interview that the PAC had sixteen regions, each with its own regional executive controlling a number of branches, themselves divided into cells. These regions embraced most of the country including the reserves.[58] Patrick Duncan, echoing Leballo, in an article in the London Times, wrote of 150 'Cells' with it being 'not uncommon' for a cell to have 1,000 members.[59] A London newsletter carried a report of twelve 1,000-strong cells in the Western Cape.[60] These figures are likely to have been inflated. In December 1959 before its banning the PAC claimed a total affiliation of 150 branches with 31,035 members.[61] Even this figure was a remarkably rapid expansion, bearing in mind the statistics given one month previously for 101 branches and 24,664 members distributed in the following fashion:

Transvaal	- 47 branches -	13,324 members
Cape	- 34 branches -	7,427 members
Natal	- 15 branches -	3,612 members
Orange Free State	- 5 branches -	301 members [62]

As will be obvious from figures cited in the previous chapter even this quite modest claim should be treated with scepticism: according to the available evidence it is unlikely that membership of the Western Cape exceeded 1,000, and this seemed to be where the organisation was strongest.[63] A claim by Robert Sobukwe that at the time of the launching of the Pass Campaign PAC membership totalled 200,000[64] should not be taken seriously. If, before the banning of the organisation the PAC leadership presented inaccurate information on the size of

their following then their membership claims produced after April 1960 were likely to have been no more reliable. Numerical calculations of membership, though, are misleading indications of a movement's capacity to mobilise large numbers of people. As we have seen in the case of the Cape Town disturbances, relatively small numbers of activists could function as catalysts for large scale unrest in a volatile social context. More important are the questions of where the organisation's members were situated, what sort of people were they, and what kind of social environment did they live in.

It is possible to document the existence of sixty-eight Poqo groups as functioning in the April 1961 to April 1963 period (the two dates representing the period between the PAC's banning and the time of the projected uprising). These can be grouped in the following regional concentrations:

Transvaal	22
Western Cape	16
Eastern Cape	11
Transkei	14
Natal	4
Orange Free State	2

Table A provides a summary of the evidence upon which this data is based. Let us look at each regional concentration in turn, beginning with the Transvaal.

The twenty two Transvaal branches listed in the table represent those on which information is available, either from first hand testimony of former activists from the Transvaal organisation, or from the records of the trials of those groups arrested by the police. Obviously the data is incomplete but because of the inadequacy of the leadership's security precautions (see below) it is unlikely that many other active groups existed.

The major areas of PAC activity in this period were first in Pretoria and then the townships of the West Rand and the Southern Transvaal. Reflecting a previous pattern these were areas where the ANC had been relatively weak or inactive. The reasons for the PAC's success in expanding its following in Pretoria must be left to the historical analysis in Chapter Six. Here our concern will be limited to forming generalisations about the movement's social character and quality of organisation. From the often sparse details provided by trial reports and newspaper reports it seems that the Transvaal membership was generally youthful - the vast majority being in their teens or early twenties - and if they were not still attending school were usually employed in white-collar occupations. A few examples will have to suffice. The eight men convicted for a PAC conspiracy in Daveytown included a clerical worker, a laboratory assistant, a caterer, an insurance salesman and a schoolboy. Their ages ranged from seventeen to twenty-three years.[65] In Pretoria at least two groups consisted entirely or mainly of school children. This was the case in Atteridgeville Township, where a PAC cell led by two teachers existed at Hofmeyr High School[66] as well as at Kilnerton High School.[67] There was also a PAC cell (or branch?) at the Hebron African Teacher Training Collete.[68] Four men imprisoned for their activities as part of a PAC conspiracy in Orlando, Soweto, included an unemployed clerk, an unemployed school leaver and an employee of the Municipal Pass Office. All four were aged twenty or twenty-one.[69] In Dobsonville, Roodepoort, the twenty-nine year old editor of a religious

newspaper was alleged to be chairman of the local PAC branch.[70] The chairman of the PAC's Vaal region was David Sibeko, a young sports journalist.[71] Even from this very impressionistic picture there are obvious contrasts with the movement developing in Langa described earlier in the chapter. Noticeable by their absence from the list of identifiable Transvaal PAC members are industrial or service workers and hostel dwellers. Here the PAC was a movement of the young, the urbanised and the lower middle class and when educational details are available they suggest that most members had had at least a few years of primary education and that many had attended or were attending high school. The last point is worth drawing attention to in a context in which African secondary school enrolment in 1960 represented less than 4% of total African school enrolment.[72] The importance of schoolchildren as an element in the PAC's following was often attested to by PAC leaders in the early 1960s.[73] What evidence exists in the form of trials does not suggest an extensive PAC following in the 1960-1963 period in Natal. Efforts were made to rebuild the organisation after its banning in the Durban area in January 1961 and there were attempts to proselytise and recruit in Pietermaritzburg, Howick and Chesterville. According to an interview with Jordan Ngubane a PAC 'Task Force' at the Ohlanga Institute existed to which his son belonged.[74] In 1963 it received instructions to set fire to surrounding cane fields as its contribution to the uprising. From the limited information available to attempt even tentative generalisations would not be justifiable. The same is also the case with the Orange Free State, where only two branches can be identified as existing before April 1960,

in Welkom and Bethlehem.[75] The goldmining town of Welkom continued to be a centre of PAC activity with at least three groups being active after the banning of the organisation.[76]

The Cape Province and the Transkei contained the main centres of PAC activity. In the case of the Eastern Cape, evidence from the 1960-1963 period suggests that there were PAC branches in the two main towns, East London and Port Elizabeth, in educational institutions (Bensonvale,[77] Lovedale College[78] and Fort Hare University College[79]), and in several of the smaller towns as well: De Aar,[80] Grahamstown,[81] Herschel,[82] King William's Town,[83] Molteno,[84] Queenstown,[85] and Steynsburg.[86] With the exception of King William's Town there is very little information available on the 1963 Poqo groups in the smaller towns, though after 1963 teachers played a key role in Poqo conspiracies in those centres as well as in Middleburg[87] and may have done so earlier. Bearing in mind the concentration of important African educational institutions in the Eastern Cape and the evidence of political activity within them it is a reasonable hypothesis that some of their graduates may have functioned as political catalysts in nearby communities. In King William's Town, for instance, one of the members of the local Poqo groups had recently been expelled from Lovedale.[88] In King William's Town thirty-three men were accused in 1963 of taking part in a Poqo insurrection. They were led by three factory workers, local men who had grown up in the town's locations of Zwelitsha and Tshatshe. With the exception of seven men most of the accused were under twenty-five years of age and the oldest was only fifty.[89] A similar picture emerges from a trial concerning four men from New Brighton, Port Elizabeth:

they and the various other people cited in the trial as Poqo activists were young, with at most a few years of primary education, born in the locality, and if not at school employed in unskilled capacities in various factories: a steelworks and a car spring factory are specifically referred to in the record.[90] For the Eastern Province there is most evidence of PAC activity in East London. One of the original nuclei of Africanists was in East London and the local PAC branch had been active in the 1960 pass campaign. One of the leading Pan-Africanists in the town, C. J. Fazzie, had been involved in Youth League politics in the 1940s. Sentenced for incitement in 1960 he was subsequently placed under house arrest though he was still understood to be active politically by the Rand based leadership.[91] During this time he was employed as a timekeeper at a local textile mill.[92] Four trials testify to a relatively high level of PAC activity in East London's Duncan Village in the period 1962-1963: once again the accused and their identified accomplices were predominantly young men or youths, power station, timber yard and car assembly workers as well as schoolboys, though one of the more important men in the local organisation, C. V. Mangaza was a garage proprietor in Duncan Village.[93] As with the other Eastern Province centres the available evidence suggests that PAC activists were people from an urban background and origin.

This last point is in contrast to the predominant social character of Poqo's following in the Western Cape which was, as we have seen, composed principally of the inmates of migrant workers hostels, employers' compounds, as well as farm labourers.

Poqo influence among Western Cape migrant workers was important in generating support for the movement in the Transkei, where many of the migrants had their homes. Significantly one finds no comparable degree of Poqo support in the Ciskeian reserves which form the immediate hinterland of East London and King William's Town.[94] In the Transkei itself out of the fourteen districts which comprise the southern half of the territory (including Glen Grey - until 1975 part of the Ciskei though adjacent to the Transkei) nine were affected by Poqo activity. Trial evidence of Poqo cells exists in the cases of Kentani, Willowvale, Mquanduli, Idutywa, Ngqeleni, Umtata, Engcobo, St. Marks and Glen Grey districts.[95] Ten out of the twenty Transkei trials mentioned in 1963 press reports involved twenty or more men who themselves only represented a proportion of those said to be implicated in conspiracies. Apart from those conspiracies which involved Cape Town migrant workers who set out from Cape Town to the Transkei to murder Chief Kaiser Matanzima the most common occupation mentioned in records and reports is 'peasant' but it is also evident that Poqo membership embraced quite a wide social spectrum: unemployed highschool children, teachers, a Methodist lay preacher, a shoemaker and even a senior Tembu Chief were amongst those convicted for Poqo activity. This is not surprising: the several hundred people involved in some of the Poqo related incidents[96] suggests that in some rural locations the Poqo movement represented or was at least part of a fairly generalised revolt with a much wider social constituency than was the case in the Eastern Cape towns

(predominantly school children and young unskilled labourers) and the Transvaal (school children and young clerical workers).

Just as the social character of the movement varied from region to region so too did the nature of its organisation. In the Transvaal it seems likely there was quite an elaborate hierarchical organisational structure imposed on the movement whilst elsewhere organisational patterns were looser and more spontaneous in their evolution. The Transvaal arrangements came closest to the bureaucratic pattern depicted by Leballo with by 1963 there existing two functioning regions, the Witwatersrand (including Pretoria), the Southern Transvaal (Vereeniging, Vanderbijlpark, etc.)[97].

There was some attempt within township based branches to divide up the membership into 10 to 15 man 'cells'.[98] These would sometimes be based on a particular institution (e.g. a school) or locality within the township. In fact 'cells' often met together in large meetings to be addressed by branch and more senior members.[99] Within each branch a 'task force' would be constituted from the younger men in the organisation. The 'task force' members would do guard duty at meetings, collect and manufacture weapons and explosives and in the event of the uprising undertake the initial attacks. Each branch would have a chairman and subordinate to him, a task force leader. There would also be 'block stewards' with recruiting functions within a certain area.[100] A block corresponded to a cell. To communicate with the Maseru leadership a clumsy code was used in which PAC branches and their activity would be described with reference to forms of popular entertainment.

Branches were football teams, cinemas or dance-halls and their offices and functions would be described accordingly. The police were the 'forces of darkness' or 'skins'. The uprising itself was called 'the twist session' or 'the jive session'.[101]

Notwithstanding its subjection to the supervision of the national leadership and despite the efforts at secrecy it seems that the organisation in the Transvaal was weak and demoralised. An insight into the general state of the Witwatersrand is given in a letter dated 30th March, 1963 to the Maseru leadership from the Witwatersrand 'Football Club Manager' (Regional Chairman?) which was intercepted by the police.[102] The letter provides a telling impression of an organisation preoccupied with personal feuds and internal suspicions, these exacerbated by the arrests of branch organisers whom the police had been able to trace through the Maseru's leadership's habit of using the post office as its main vehicle of communication:

> There has been gross negligence with most of our players here instead of them leaving addresses with other people when they were at HQ they only supplied pseudonyms with their proper addresses leaving themselves open to such dangers. They talk too much. They are emotional and not very revolutionary in their behaviour.
>
> We have withdrawn recognition of the Jabulani team. It was formed by people from Zola who did not want to respect their local leaders. Even most of the members of the team are from Zola and were being told a pack of lies into losing confidence and faith in their local management by people who do not want to be led by others. . . . These people in order to destroy me dubbed me as an informer, exploiting the sensitivities of players towards skins. It is quite clear from reports I have been getting of the local intelligence that even the men I appointed as my captains believe these things.

> (The West Rand) . . . are comparatively doing better than the central complex. They shouldn't at all be drawn into this seething cauldron of hatred and personal clashes which seems to be our disease.

Trial evidence suggests that the Wits officials accepted the uprising plans only reluctantly[103] and this is corroborated by the circulars sent to the Transvaal by Leballo in February and March reprimanding branches for the failure to prepare for the uprising.

> I must warn you very strongly that I shall not be intimidated by your failure to obtain these arrangements. The Twist MUST just go on whether you have these things or not. It is not my own fault. You are to blame for that. I am going ahead with my plans for the Twist or the Tournament. What I do not like of you is not to tell me the truth. You talk too much but you cannot live up to your claims!!! You don't do hard work sufficiently. 104

The Eastern Cape more or less conformed to the Transvaal pattern of organisation and there were also signs of low morale in some of the branches. In New Brighton, Port Elizabeth, for instance, recalcitrant recruits (including a Task Force captain) were regularly punished with beatings for poor attendance at branch meetings.[105] As in the case of Johannesburg groups the New Brighton Task Force was reprimanded for being behind-hand in their organisation.[106] During 1961, incidentally, New Brighton's PAC members were under the leadership of Pearce Gqobose, the Eastern Cape regional chairman. Gqobose, an ex-serviceman and social worker, had been involved in Africanist politics since 1946. He fled the country in 1962 to avoid arrest and joined Leballo's 'Presidential Council' in Maseru.

In the case of the Western Cape and the Transkeian groups there is less evidence to suggest a formal defined hierarchy of

leadership and as we have noted the structure of the organisation was influenced by pre-existing social networks provided by 'home-boy' groups, burial associations and rurally oriented resistance movements formed in the wake of the implementation of the Bantu Authorities Act independently of the nationalist political organisation. These included the Dyakobs,[107] the Jacobins,[108] and the Makuluspan.[109] Such bodies served to transmit information and ideas between the Western Cape and the Transkei. It seems likely that in the Transkei itself the Poqo groups were started by migrant workers from Cape Town.[110] The more autonomous character of the movement[111] in these areas tended to protect it from police interference: a great deal of police information resulted from the indiscretions of the Maseru leadership and its communication system. A final distinguishing feature of these Poqo groups was their resort to magical protective measures.[112] This last point testifies to the major contrast that can be drawn between the Transvaal/Eastern Cape groups and the Western Cape/Transkei groups. In the case of the former the movement was constructed around an organisational conception and strategic idea of a small and socially removed group of leaders: at base level the Poqo groups had very little vitality of their own: their members' main activity was to attend meetings at which they were alternately harangued or exhorted to make themselves ready for the great day of the uprising. Little was said at such meetings which was directly relevant to their specific circumstances. The movement's constituency was predominantly youthful, often with a limited range of social experience. In the case of the latter the movement developed

organisationally from the bottom up, adapting itself to the social institutions it found around it, generating its own ideas and fuelled to a much greater extent by locally relevant anxieties and preoccupations, particularly those emanating from the countryside.

To return to our narrative, by the last three months of 1962 preparations for a national insurrection had begun in earnest. Poqo task force members were instructed by their leaders to gather materials and manufacture weapons and task force leaders and branch chairmen were urged to step up recruitment. A thousand recruits were needed for each 'hall' (cell or block).[113] The weapons were very crude. Bombs were improvised from petrol-filled bottles and tennis balls filled with ball-bearings, permanganate of potash, glycerin and match heads. Swords were fashioned from filed-down pieces of scrap metal.[114] Recruitment methods were no more sophisticated. A group in Port Elizabeth were told:

> 'We must organise right through the towns and in the buses. When you sit in a bus, the man next to you, you must tell him about this organisation.' 115

Perhaps to compensate for the rudimentary quality of these preparations many task force members were encouraged to believe that on the great day help would come from outside: weapons had been promised by Russia one of the New Brighton task force leaders claimed,[116] though more commonly it was asserted that the assistance would be African:

> 'The African States would assist us in the Revolution by coming in aeroplanes and various war vehicles.' 117

> 'The independent states are with us - they are going to help us. Ben Bella has promised assistance. They will come with aeroplanes.' 118

> 'We would be supplied with arms and ammunition from the African States from the North and we would also be assisted by their soldiers.' 119

The promise of external aid was a recurrent theme in Leballo's talks to the groups of branch leaders who were summoned to Maseru in February and March of 1963.[120] In November 1962 Leballo had left Basutoland for a few weeks to visit the United Nations offices, stopping off on his return home in Ghana and it is possible that some of the urgency of his subsequent communications to his followers was inspired by assurances of support from Ghanaian and other African government spokesmen.

Task force members all seem to have had a broadly similar conception of how the uprising would begin. In each centre different groups would be assigned to attacks on police stations, post offices, power installations and other government buildings. Groups should then turn their attention to the white civilian population which they were to kill indiscriminately. The killing should go on for four hours and should then cease, when the insurgents should await further instructions.[121] Most of the features of this plan were attributable to the instructions contained in Leballo's talks to branch leaders and they formed the basic elements in an insurrectionary concept shared by PAC conspiracies throughout the country.[122] Exactly when this uprising was to take place was not revealed to rank and file. It would be in 1963 for that was the original date set by Sobukwe for the attainment of South African 'independence', but as for the exact date this would be appointed by the leadership in the near future. In the Eastern Cape some branches were told

that the date of the uprising would coincide with Sobukwe's release from prison so that he would once again be able to direct the struggle.[123] This reflected a more generalised attribution to Sobukwe of prophetlike qualities of leadership.[124] Only in April were task force members given a definite date and this merely a day or two before the chosen time.[125] Branches and regional leaders were sent letters at the end of March giving them instructions for an uprising in early April. The addressed letters were intercepted by the police when they arrested the courier sent from Maseru to post the letters in Bloemfontein.[126]

By the end of March the police had a fairly accurate idea of the nature and scope of these arrangements. In November Poqo insurgents acting on their own initiative had staged an attack on the small Western Province town of Paarl and the following month several groups travelled from Cape Town to the Transkei to assassinate Matanzima and were intercepted by the police. In March several branch leaders returning to the Cape and the Transvaal from Maseru were arrested and detained. On March 24th Leballo gave a press conference in which he announced the PAC's intention to mount a general uprising, claiming that over 100,000 armed followers were waiting for his signal.[127] Final instructions had to be given to twenty-three branch chairmen who were now on their way back to South Africa. In the last week of March South African police, aided by the list of addresses they were able to assemble from Leballo's correspondence, began to detain key local activists in the Transvaal. On April 1st the colonial authorities in Basutoland arrested those PAC leaders they could find in Maseru and closed

down the PAC's office confiscating a quantity of documentation including membership lists allegedly containing 10,000 names and addresses.[128] Leballo prudently went into hiding. According to affidavits the Basutoland police raid was carried out in the presence of South African security policy and the colonial government was later accused of supplying the South Africans with information.[129] In the first week of April hundreds of arrests took place throughout South Africa. In May the Minister of Justice announced that 3,246 Poqo suspects had been arrested.[130] Despite the arrests Poqo groups mounted attacks in several centres in the Eastern Cape and the Transvaal.

In King William's Town at 2.30 on the morning of the 9th a group of fifteen men entered the courtyard of the office building which contained the police station and Commissioner's office. Their first objective was to free Poqo suspects held prisoner before launching a general insurrection. They were part of a group of sixty men armed with incendiary bombs, knives and clubs. These men threw their bombs through the charge office windows and advanced on the cell doors before being driven back by police gunfire. They thereupon dispersed and subsequently many were arrested and tried <u>en masse</u>. One of the accused, incidently, was called Bomwana Biko.[131]

In East London the police successfully anticipated local PAC preparations. On the same night as the King William's Town attack two to three hundred men walking in groups of four to eight congregated in the open veld outside the old section of Duncan Village. Many carried homemade swords and axes in haversacks and bags. From the moment the men began assembling, at 6.30 on the evening of the 8th, they were being watched by

police several of whom had arrived at the rendezvous before them. Apparently an informant had betrayed the Poqo men. At about 10 o'clock when the last men had arrived the police watchers sent for reinforcements but the advent of these was noticed by a task force patrol which fired on the police. After an exchange of shots the meeting broke up, eleven men being arrested immediately and over a hundred later. Subsequent trials confirmed that the men were about to launch an uprising in East London according to a pre-formulated plan. The police reinforcements interrupted them while they were waiting for petrol. Children evidently played an important role in the preparations, young teenage boys being given files, hacksaws and motor springs and told to fashion these into swords (a task which took two days to produce one blade). Some of the youths were recruited by women. In both this trial and the King William's Town trial there was evidence that many of the young auxiliaries were reluctant conscripts rather than highly motivated volunteers.[132]

The following night three small groups of young men travelled from Orlando to Johannesburg. Two men from one of the groups broke into a clothing store while others stood guard and using petrol bombs set alight counters in the old section of the building. A similar attack was intended on a sportswear shop but the insurgents were interrupted by a police patrol after breaking a window. A third group marched to the premises of Shell (SA) Pty which accommodated some oil storage facilities. Finding the main gates locked and on encountering a night watchman the members of the task force decided to go home. These events were part of a larger conspiracy for which there is no

evidence of any comparably serious attempts to implement, the objectives of which included the destruction of Orlando police and power stations. The targets in the Johannesburg central business district were well chosen. They were old or by their nature highly inflammable and they were situated in an architecturally congested part of town where the likelihood of a well established fire spreading was high. These arson attempts in Johannesburg were the climax of several days of hurried preparation including several meetings being held in the week before the attack at which fresh recruits were inducted (some of whom participated in the Johannesburg task force) and an all day bomb making session on the 8th. Task forces were informed of their targets only immediately before setting out to attack them. There is evidence to suggest several other Poqo conspiracies in Soweto, and it should be remembered that many of the Rand PAC groups had already been arrested. The last minute character of the preparations, however, and the fact that the events took place one day later than in the Eastern Cape, and the manner in which the attacks were implemented helped to strengthen the impression that many of the Rand insurrectionists were less than totally committed to the conspiracy.[133]

This view is corroborated by details from the trial of David Sibeko, the Chairman of the Southern Transvaal region. Though the evidence of state witnesses was discounted in court and Sibeko was acquitted, he in exile subsequently confirmed in broad outline the truth of the prosecution's case.[134] One witness claimed that he was nominated at a meeting in the Vereeniging area to travel to Maseru. In Maseru he was given

instructions concerning the uprising. On returning to Vereeniging he was told that the date of the uprising was arranged for April 7th. On April 1st he was told to collect some bombs from a woman in Pretoria. These were going to be used in an attack on Vanderbijlpark police station and the Escom power installation. He allegedly failed to find the woman and returned empty handed. The bombs were collected on the 7th by Gabriel Sandamela, one of the members of the regional executive. The witness was informed by Sibeko on the 7th that the uprising had been postponed for a day because of the police being aware of the conspiracy. However, when he next saw Sibeko and Sandamela they were busy packing and they told him they were preparing to travel to Dar es Salaam via Bechuanaland. There was no uprising in Vereeniging.[135]

Elsewhere the story was much the same: large numbers of arrests frustrated some local conspiracies and demoralised others. The Maseru leadership was either in hiding or in prison. Robert Sobokwe, probably ignorant of the uprising plan, on completing his prison sentence was detained on Robben Island for a further six years. In June the Minister of Justice claimed that the Poqo movement had been destroyed. By June the following year 1,162 Poqo members had been convicted under the sabotage act.[137]

Notwithstanding the Minister's claim, Poqo groups continued to be active for some years to come, the last recorded incidence of a Poqo conspiracy being in Welkom in December 1968. There was no comparably ambitious effort by a central leadership to organise a national insurrection: Poqo activity after April 1963 was very localised in character. Until 1965 there was some effort by Maseru-based leaders to coordinate the activities

of different PAC/Poqo branches. Despite a shift which developed in the course of 1964 in the external leader's conception of strategy away from insurrectionism in favour of protracted guerilla warfare surviving activists within the country continued to plot apocalyptic local uprisings. On the Witwatersrand, for example, a regional committee was formed towards the end of April 1963. It was led by two professional golfers and a boxing manager. It succeeded in re-establishing links with the Maseru group and conceived a plan to mount an uprising on December 16th, the Day of the Covenant. Whites attending nationalist festivities in Pretoria were to be attacked by bees. Unusually, for a Rand conspiracy, the participants intended to deploy witchcraft, though they also tried to obtain hand grenades from a man who worked at the Drill Hall in Johannesburg. The conspirators were encouraged by Edwin Makoti and Leballo (who reappeared in Maseru in September 1963) for the rising would coincide with the United Nations session at which they hoped to mobilise international support. Makoti visited Johannesburg in October to make arrangements for the passage out of the country of recruits for guerrilla training but was informed by the committee that they had failed to find people willing to leave the country. Lack of transport facilities and a failing confidence in the powers of witchcraft persuaded the conspirators to abandon their plans.[138] Meanwhile in May 1963 a group in Lady Frere (Glen Grey district) plotted attacks on the magistrates home and the police station followed by more generalised arson and killing.[139] Elsewhere remaining PAC groups in Cape Town, Durban and East London

contented themselves with recruiting and sending men abroad for military instruction.[140]

The next phase of internal activity followed the conception of a plan in July 1964 by the Presidential Council for a Lesotho-based guerilla operation. The plan seemed to have two separate sources of inspiration. While, in conformity with previous PAC strategic thinking it argued that:

> 'Insurrection or even minor skirmishes of an effective nature, well planned, are sufficient to set in motion a full scale revolution any time in South Africa.'

it went on to state:

> 'Our struggle is bound to be a protracted one. We must not reckon in terms of lightning warfare and an immediate victory. Apart from the unpredictable nature of warfare itself, the enemy is fully aware of our intentions and has been preparing himself accordingly for a number of years. Ours is a guerilla form of warfare against regular army forces. Our indispensable condition in these circumstances is to wear down the enemy systematically, hitting him hardest where he is weakest and then retreating where he is strongest.' 141

The document comprised mainly of detailed plans for launching a guerilla insurgency: it discussed escape routes, training programmes, the use of explosives, logistics, lines of communication, and the role of external diplomatic representatives of the movement. Initial operations would have two dimensions. Careful clandestine activity would complete the groundwork for a long-term rural guerilla insurgency. An operational base was to be established in Qacha's Nek, a village on the Lesotho border with the Transkei. A boat purchased by Nana Mahomo in London would offload arms on to the Transkeian coast.[142] PAC trainees would form a nucleus of a locally

recruited insurgent force. While these preparations were in progress,[143] support for the movement would be generated by a campaign of terrorism which would include assassinations of important white politicians, kidnapping of school children, the destruction of symbolically important buildings, as well as the seizure of gold bullion, money, arms and ammunition.

It is difficult to ascertain how seriously the Maseru group regarded this plan. Later it was suggested that the main purpose of the document outlining it was to persuade the Organisation of African Unity's African Liberation Committee to allocate funds to the PAC. The equivalent of R100,000 was handed over by the ALC to Potlake Leballo in late 1964 and subsequently Leballo was charged with fraud when he could not account for a large proportion of this sum's expenditure.[144] Despite this possible motive it seems that various efforts were made to implement parts of the plan. A Transkeian based Poqo cell active in the Mqanduli district was instructed to locate hiding places for arms and insurgents.[145] In September 1964 activists from East London were taken to various houses in the Quthing area and shown how to make firearms.[146] Two members of the Presidential Council, Letlaka and Mfaxa, were later found in a Maseru trial to have administered a guerilla training camp near Quthing. Lectures, physical training and weapons construction were part of the curriculum.[147] Cape Town based Poqo groups were delegated the tasks of reconnoitering the Hex River railway tunnel with a view to derailing the 'Blue Train' Johannesburg to Cape Town express and searching for guerilla hiding places in Namaqualand and the mountainous area near Paarl.[148] It seems that since 1963 a new regional organisation

had been established in Cape Town under much closer control of the Maseru leadership than the previous Poqo network.[149] In the Eastern Cape rural centre of Molteno a PAC branch was revived in April 1964 by a local school teacher, Harry Mathebe, after he had attended a meeting with a member of the Presidential Council in Herschel. In the course of 1964 Mathebe succeeded in recruiting thirty. The branch held its first meeting in December 1964 at which plans for a local uprising were discussed. Before these were to be implemented it was resolved that a trip should be made to Johannesburg to buy guns. Conspirators were allegedly told that after the uprising they would be able to 'stay in the white houses'.[150] Most of the new branch's members were arrested in February. A group with similar intentions was discovered in Steynsburg. Once again it was led by a school teacher. His fifty-odd followers included a shop assistant and a shoemaker but mainly comprised illiterate unskilled labourers.[151]

On 29th April, 1965 the Maseru based members of the Presidential Council were taken into custody by the Basutoland authorities and shortly afterwards put on trial (Potlake Leballo was not amongst these, he had left Maseru in August the previous year and was now in Dar es Salaam). The Maseru group was acquitted on appeal (it was found its members had committed no crimes in Basutoland). Some of them subsequently joined the other PAC principals in Dar es Salaam, others fell victim to the leadership feuds which plagued the movement and were expelled by Leballo, and one, John Pokela, acting national secretary, was captured (allegedly kidnapped in Buthe Buthe, Basuto) in August 1966 by the South African authorities and convicted.[152]

From 1965 remaining PAC groups inside the country functioned independently: there were no longer any lines of communication with any leadership centre outside the country. Their activity conformed to the established insurrectionary pattern: groups in Laingsburg,[153] Graaff Reinet,[154] Victoria West,[155] Middleburg,[156] Steynsburg[157] in the Cape and Umzinto[158] and Esperenza[159] in Natal were discovered in the course of their preparations for local uprisings. In addition insurrectionary PAC cells were formed among convicts by previous Robben Island inmates of Gamkaspoort,[160] Baviaanspoort,[161] Bellville[162] and Leeukop[163] prisons. With the exception of the convicts about whom no sociological detail is available from the trial evidence, most of the other conspiracies apart from their common strategic intention had a strikingly similar social composition: leaders were usually teachers or clergymen and their following normally consisted of unskilled labourers. A few examples must suffice. In 1964 Jonathan Hermanus arrived in Graaff Reinet location as Methodist Minister. Initially he was active in efforts to improve the prevalently poor local conditions in the location. To this end he formed a Wesleyan Guild for church youth. In early 1966 increasingly disenchanted with social work he began to recruit people for a Poqo branch. He was transferred in 1967 and the movement died out.[164] As well as Hermanus, church elders and a school teacher were later tried for leading roles in a violent conspiracy.[165] In Victoria West a minister, a school principle and various service workers - garage attendants, milkmen, shop assistants, messengers and hospital labourers - were involved in plans to obtain weapons to attack police stations, cut

telephone wires and poison water supplies. According to one state witness, it was said at one of the meetings:

> 'When the whites come to Victoria West, they soon had a house and a new car. They enjoyed better wages and privileges and that was why whites had to be killed. In this way the fatherland could be regained for the non-whites.' 166

Three of the conspiracies were composed of farmworkers, those in Natal and at Laingsburg. The Natal conspiracies were located on sugar estates and were led by a PAC activist from Durban. The Laingsburg movement was led by a lay-preacher, R. Ndoylo. He appeared at a Saturday bible meeting attended by the workers from one farm and chose as his text a passage from Lamentations: 'Our skin was black like an oven because of the terrible famine'. He went on to 'explain to us that it was difficult to get food and water and that our land was being taken away from us. At Vleiland (the farm) we got very little money. We were paid 70 cents a week and that was very little . . . He said according to Poqo they should be paid 70 cents a day'. Ndoylo later told his followers that after the arrival of weapons from the Congo they would participate in an 'uprising which would take place simultaneously all over the country on an appointed day. Ndoylo would tell the people at Vleiland when that day was'.[166]

In Welkom a departure from this pattern occurred in 1968 when J. Ramoshaba, a former student of Fort Hare, a social worker employed on the goldfields, and a member of the Thabang Township Urban Bantu Council, presided over a revival of the local PAC branch. He and his confederates attempted to raise funds to send people abroad for military training. With their arrest PAC activity inside South Africa was to cease until the mid 1970s.[167]

In an analysis of the Poqo movement some useful starting points can be drawn from the literature on general theories of collective action. Existing treatments of South African insurgent movements have on the whole been influenced by the social theory emerging from the United States in the 1960s. Edward Feit and Fatima Meer both seem to share the premise that 'order is the normal state of things and that disorder is very difficult to sustain'.[168] As Meer puts it: 'Revolution, though dependent on the populace, is not a popular cause. The security of a familiar system, even if limiting, is invariably preferable to the risks of change'.[169] In such a context collective violence is viewed as pathological and hence irrational:

> 'The picture of a mass ready for the final plunge to liberate itself is deceptive. It is observed by abstracting the motifs of rebellion scattered through a tapestry, which otherwise speaks of reasonable peace and quiet. While spontaneous uprisings are clear indications of deep sores, they are certainly no indication of people's intelligent, rational and conscious awareness of these sores. They are rather the symptoms of mass psychosis, and like the psychotic who is unable to see the root of his passion beyond the immediate trifle which provoked it, so too, is the vision of the mass shallow and blurred.' 170

The instigators of revolt are motivated not so much by the material grievances of the poor but the 'status incongruity' of a middle class minority.[171]

Meer and Feit's work testifies to the influence of the view which understands violence as a consequence of social breakdown. A period of rapid social change is seen to erode customary social restraints while simultaneously the material effects of change introduce into people's lives insecurity and tension. Mass protests occur with the changing political expectations resulting

from economic progress. On their fringes minorities drawn from the marginal elements of society, those most psychologically and materially disoriented by the changes attendant upon industrialisation and urbanisation express their anxieties and emotions through violence. Writers in this school[172] discern a statistical coincidence in the incidence of crime, individual violence and collective violence[173] and the latter is consequently analysed as simply another example of socially deviant behaviour. Breakdown theory has influenced the South African government's perception of civil disorder as well as that of its liberal opponents: the former is concerned to deny the possibility of violence being an expression of reasonable social and political aspirations among Africans,[174] the latter are concerned to ameliorate the social conditions which they understand to give rise to unbalanced behaviour.[175]

Another broad category in the analysis of violence drawing its insights from empirical historiography rather than social psychology perceives collective violence not as the result of social breakdown, normlessness and anomie, but rather as the expression of the conflicting interests of coherent social groups as they struggle for ascendency. George Rude's work on the French revolutionary crowd[176] and his and E. J. Hobsbawm's analysis of the 1830 'Captain Swing' riots in rural England are two of the best known studies in this category.[177] In their and the work of their disciples collective violence finds its constituency among social groups whose existence is tightly woven into the fabric of their community. The targets of their actions are systematically selected for their symbolic or actual

function. In its outbursts the behaviour of the crowd reflects a distillation of the political and material grievances of broad swathes of society. Its violence is symptomatic of the inherent contradictions of any society characterised by profound inequalities of wealth and power.

A useful refinement of these ideas is provided by the Tilly's study of a century of collective violence in France, Italy and Germany.[178] They find the explanation for specifically violent forms of collective behaviour not so much in social change itself but rather in the impact of such phenomena as the expansion of the capacity of national states and national markets on popular conceptions of justice.[179] In their survey of riots and civil disorder in their three chosen countries they discern a shift between three different phases and types of collective action. In the first phase, competitive collective action, group violence normally takes place as a result of intra or inter-communal competition over resources. Feuds, village rivalries and ritual encounters between competing groups of artisans are expressions of competitive collective action. In a South African context faction fighting or the activities of the Amalaitas[180] at a certain phase in their development could be understood in this context. Competitive violence predominates on the fringes of the national state or economy. When these latter start infringing on local rights and resources a second generation of popular violence manifests itself. This the Tilly's term reactive violence, essentially acts of resistance to attempts from the centre to control the periphery. Tax rebellions, food riots, luddism, and the evasion of enclosed land are examples of reactive violence. With the

triumph of the state and the national market a third set of struggles ensues as groups make claims for rights and resources not previously enjoyed. Here collective action is geared to attempts 'to control rather than resist different segments of the national structure'.[181] The insurrectionary strike would be an example of what the Tilly's call 'proactive' collective violence.

Ostensibly social breakdown analysis would seem easier to apply to the Poqo disturbances. The movement was drawn from groups which were peripheral rather than central to the development of a modern industrial economy, or from people who had not been totally socially encapsulated by that process. The role unskilled migrant labourers, farmworkers (in an increasingly capital intensive agriculture), service workers in small rural towns, school children even can be conceptualised thus. The conjunction in the movement's constituency between groups threatened with or actually undergoing a process of marginalisation and such middle class elements as teachers, clerics and office workers might be explained with reference to both the morally disorienting effects of rapid social change for the former and a crisis of rising expectations for the latter. The inclusion of magic and witchcraft in Poqo/PAC tactics, the impracticality of its insurrectionary concept, the millenarian undertones of the movement - its belief in an apocalyptic 'great day', its investiture of Sobukwe with biblical attributes of leadership, its strategic dependence on external intervention[182] - all these features could be employed to explain the movements emergence and following in terms of the transient social dis-

locations introduced as a by-product of modernisation. In such a scheme the 'irrationality' of the movement would reflect the hysteria of victims of social progress.

There are problems though with such an analysis. Examining the movement in its different contexts its appeal at times is far more general than such an argument might suggest. In Lady Frere, for example, in 1963, a Poqo conspiracy involved a major proportion of the adult African men in the location.[183] The superimposition of Poqo on earlier resistance organisations in the migrant society of the Western Cape and the peasant communities of the Transkei and its drawing upon well established networks and local ideology again does not suggest a movement based upon morally disoriented people in a situation of anomie. The violent Poqo conspiracies took place in a context of much wider incidence of collective violence than is obvious from the academic treatments of South African insurgencies cited above. To take one example: in the time when Poqo cells were being established among school children (and in some cases their teachers) African rural schools were periodically shaken by waves of pupil violence. In 1963, for instance, in three months when there were reports of rioting, arson, strikes and mass walkouts or suspensions at five leading educational institutions in the Eastern Cape and the Transkei, Lovedale,[184] the Faku Institute, Flagstaff,[185] Bethal College, Butterworth,[186] Sigcau High School, Flagstaff[187] and Healdtown.[188] Once again, this does not suggest, at least in its local context, that Poqo's violence was that of the socially deviant.

A more helpful approach may be found in the second group of writers referred to above and in particular from the conceptions derived from the Tilly's work. Poqo's social complexity does not permit easy causal generalisations; its regional variation in both constituency and organisation embraced very different political responses which were different at least partly because they were responses to different things. The political preoccupations of migrant workers in Cape Town were to an extent shaped by events in the Transkei; despite their involvement in the urban economy they still had residual links with rural culture. In the Transkei itself peasants (who themselves often had experience of migrant labour) were engaged in defending their rights over land and their notions of land husbandry against intensifying efforts by the state to control and modify these. In such context Poqo drew its strength largely from what the Tilly's would call reactive and competitive movements though its initial inspiration was proactive as would be the case with any nationalist organisation.[189] The historical analysis of succeeding chapters will attempt to reconstruct the movements following in the local contexts of the Transkei and Paarl. Here the actions of its participants were influenced by a communal matrix of struggle and within the limits of the knowledge available to them their behaviour was rational enough: it can be explained without recourse to notions of mass psychosis.

But this is not the whole story. The involvement of Transvaal groups in the Poqo conspiracy did not stem from reactive concerns nor did it seem to represent such a popular constituency: here the movement's following was much more

narrowly socially defined. The same too could be said for the Eastern Cape groups, unlike the Transvaal organisation they included industrial workers but these were commonly very youthful. At this point the existence of another violent insurgent movement needs to be born in mind, Umkonto we Sizwe, which was most active in the two main Eastern Province towns, in Durban and in Johannesburg and Pretoria. Umkonto was a much smaller organisation than Poqo, technologically more sophisticated in its methods, tactically more effective, and its strategy reflected an intellectually more complex analysis of South African society. While Poqo in its areas of strength drew on locally evolved resistance movements Umkonto benefited from the modern organisational framework created by a much more powerful nationalist organisation than the PAC and as well an allied trade union movement. Though Umkonto was in its conception and performance an insurgent elite nevertheless it was itself the product of a decade of mass-based proactive struggles. In two centres, Port Elizabeth and East London, there is evidence of a substantial support base for the Umkonto insurgents. The local leaders here were men who had been at the forefront of communal political assertions since the 1940s.[190] In this context the nature of Poqo's constituency in such centres as Port Elizabeth, East London or even Pretoria become more understandable: it was composed of people who though affected by a communal history of revolt belonged to groups which were not easily incorporated into the increasingly proletarian following of the ANC, or who were too young to have been involved in the pre-1960 struggles. In the case of young school children a study made in 1963 may be of some relevance. From samples of

future autobiographies written by African high school students in 1950 and 1960 it is possible to trace a declining interest in individual economic and social aspirations and a sharp increase in commitment to political activity.[191] A survey conducted among professional people, ministers, teachers, clerks and students and school children in the Transvaal showed the PAC to be the most popular group among the sample and support for the PAC tended to correlate with acceptance of violence.[192] Within the sample endorsement of violence or some type of force reflected the view of a large minority - 43 per cent. As in the case of the Transkei and the Western Cape, the Poqo conspiracies in the Transvaal and the Eastern Cape should not be examined in isolation, for apart from the activities of other insurgent movements, there is evidence of quite widespread sentiments which while not providing evidence of a popular willingness to participate in violent revolt does indicate that violent actions were widely seen as legitimate. This will become clearer in local case studies. The comparative weakness of the Transvaal/Eastern Cape impulse to violence in contrast to the behaviour of the Western Cape/Transkeian groups can be attributed to the predominant organisational features of each. In conformity with the Tilly's thesis, the former proactive movement depended on the mobilising capacity of a modern political association whilst the latter partly reactive movement drew to a much greater extent on communal bases for political action.[193] Earlier in this chapter the contrast was described as the one being an organisational structure imposed from above and the other a movement which had developed organically from the bottom

up. Given the state imposed barriers confronting Black efforts to create large scale political associations it is not surprising that the 'organic' movement provided the strongest response.

A final comment on the role of teachers in Poqo will help to underscore the argument concerning the movements communal legitimacy. As we have seen teachers figured prominently in Eastern Cape Poqo conspiracies as well as in the Transkei. In this region teachers had been uncharacteristically active in political organisations: elsewhere I have discussed the political history of the Cape African Teacher's Association as a constituent of the All African Convention.[194] With its radicalisation in the late 1940s CATA could provide an organisation based on the dense network of mission schools long established in the region. Teachers themselves had their security and status threatened by the Bantu Authorities and school boards systems and may also, suggests Colin Bundy, have been radicalised by the pupil disturbances in the region which accommodated some of the largest African schools and colleges in the country.[195] Teachers were especially influential in the countryside and small towns where illiteracy rates were high and other middle class elements often absent. Bearing in mind their poor pay and recent interference by the state in their profession it is not surprising to find radical rural opposition movements gravitating around them as leaders. In the Eastern Cape small town and rural communities were unusually subject to the influence of political organisations. As well as the narodnik character of the AAC's activity, Fort Hare and other colleges served as local disseminators of political ideas. Interviewed

in the late 1960s Tennyson Makiwane remembered:

> 'Then I got to Fort Hare where the Youth League was very well established. And there was the period when the Defiance Campaign was being launched and this attracted tremendous interest among the youth and we used to go to the neighbouring villages and organise people to the Defiance . . . as far as King William's Town, Adelaide, Beaufort and Port Elizabeth. We used to go to them at night and sometimes over weekends to address meetings of villages. . . . In our area we touched most of the villages.' 196

Relevant in this context also were the activities of the Herschel branch of the Congress Youth League in 1949. This branch ran an education class for twenty-five herdsboys in the Ndunga area. It also had plans for adults and children's literacy classes in the Bluegums area and administered a cooperative saving society which had accumulated £60.[197] The presence of PAC branches at a significant number of Eastern Cape educational institutions a decade later may help to explain the part played by teachers in small town Eastern Cape Poqo groups.

The historiographical neglect of the PAC can be related to the issues discussed above. The influence of social breakdown theory directly or indirectly has affected much of the analysis of Black South African politics. Movements of what might be diagnosed as collective madness are not considered worthy of sustained analysis by writers concerned with what they see as the mainstream of Black political response. Even Gail Gerhart, a scholar who handles theoretical issues with extreme caution, explains Poqo's behaviour with reference to a Fanonist-need for catharsis,[198] rather than in terms of the specific situation of socially coherent groups. For a writer

whose preoccupation is with the development of a natavistic black political tradition Gerhart shows a surprising lack of curiosity in one of the few popular expressions of her chosen theme. Gerhart's and other authorities lack of interest in Poqo is mainly attributable though to their preference to writing about organisations rather than social movements,[199] particularly those organisations which produce an abundance of documentation. Much of the historical writing about African politics is therefore the history of leaders, not followers. Meticulous and scholarly as some of this work is it discusses at best superficially the greater social conflicts which underlie the biographical and organisational developments which form the main focus of study. In this survey it is hoped that the historical significance of the Poqo movement is made clear: it was a response to crises of a varied but distinctive set of social groups and its strategy and ideology only becomes comprehensible when these groups and the situation with which they have to contend are clearly identified.

TABLE A: PAC/POQO GROUPS IN SOUTH AFRICA, 1960-1968

CAPE PROVINCE (EAST)

Dates	Location	Source
1963	ALIWAL NORTH	Black Star (London), May 1963, report on 130 arrests.
1963	BURGERSDORP	Star, 5 June 1963, report on unspecified trial of 7.
1964	CRADOCK	Eastern Province Herald, 11 December 1964, report on unspecified trial of 1.
1960-1965	EAST LONDON	Daily Despatch, 28 October 1963-13 November 1963, reports on State vs. Lwana and 25; Daily Despatch, 13 November 1963-19 November 1963, reports on State vs. Mgoqi and 9; Despatch, 1 April 1965, report on State vs. Loliwe and 3; State vs. Mngaza, transcript, CSAS, University of York.
1960-1963	FORT HARE University	Author's interview with former branch chairman, Neshtedi Sidzamba.
1963-1966	GRAHAMSTOWN	Rand Daily Mail, 17 May 1963, report on unspecified trial of 4; Contact, July 1966, report on State vs. Pityana and 3.
1966	GRAAFF REINET	Eastern Province Herald, 2 December 1970, report on unspecified trial of 7.
1961-1962	HERSCHEL, Benson-vale School	Bloemfontein Friend, 30 July 1971, report on State vs. Lebese.
1963	HERSCHEL	Black Star, May 1963, report on 57 arrests.
1963	KINGWILLIAMSTOWN	Daily Despatch, 28 August 1963-31 August 1963, reports on State vs. Nyobo and 32.
1962-1963	LOVEDALE COLLEGE	State vs. Mtshizana, transcript SAIRR; Interview with Sidzamba.

1963-1965	MOLTENO	PAC Newsletter (Maseru), Report on State vs. Mathebe and 13; Evening Post, 4 September 1965, report on State vs. Tyali and 29.
1966	MIDDELBURG	Evening Post, 24 June 1966, report on State vs. Silwana and 2.
1961-1963	PORT ELIZABETH, New Brighton	New Age, 3 August 1961, report on PAC activity; State vs. Neconga and 3, transcript, SAIRR; Cape Times, 19 June 1963, report on unspecified trial of 24.
1963	QUEENSTOWN	Contact, 27 November 1964, report on State vs. Gwabeni and 1.
1963-1966	STEYNSBURG	Rand Daily Mail, 14 June 1963, report on unspecified trial of 19; Evening Post, 16 February 1966, State vs. Mapete and 53; Evening Post, 23 June 1966, report on State vs. Silwana and 2.

CAPE PROVINCE (WEST)

Dates	Location	Source
1965	CAPE TOWN	Contact, May 1965, report on State vs. Mkhalipi and 3.
1962-1963	CAPE TOWN, Brooklands Chest Hospital	State vs. Budaza and 3, lawyer's notes, Sachs papers, AS/70, ICS, London University.
1962-1963	CAPE TOWN, Jewish Old Age Home	State vs. Mandla and 31, lawyer's notes, Sachs papers, AS/69, ICS, London University.
1962-1963	CAPE TOWN, Helmsley Hotel	State vs. Mandla and 31, lawyer's notes.
1961-1965	CAPE TOWN, Langa	State vs. Mandla and 31, lawyer's notes; State vs. Ngconcolo and 19, transcript, CSAS, York University; Cape Times, 26 May 1962, report on State vs. Qumbulu; Contact, December 1966, report on State vs. Mangqangwana and 1;

		Cape Argus, 17 January 1967, report on unspecified trial of 8; Cape Times, 23 August 1962, report on State vs. Galela; Cape Argus, 13 November 1967 and 23 November 1967, reports on State vs. Siyothula.
1961-1963	CAPE TOWN, Nyanga	New Age, 9 March 1961, report on arrests; Contact, 6 September 1963, report on State vs. Mcapazeli and 23; Cape Times, 23 September 1963.
1963	CAPE TOWN, Royal Dairy	Stats vs. Mandla and 31, lawyer's notes, Sachs papers.
1963	CAPE TOWN, Saint Columbus House	State vs. Mandla and 31, lawyer's notes, Sachs papers.
1963	CAPE TOWN, Seapoint	Daily Despatch, 20 August 1963, report on Stats vs. Matanga and 14.
1961	CAPE TOWN Windermere	Cape Times, 8 February 1962, report on police interruption of PAC meeting.
1963	CAMPS BAY, Rotunda Hotel	State vs. E. Dudumashe and 1, charge sheet, SAIRR.
1963	CAPE TOWN, Wynberg	Rand Daily Mail, 20 August 1963, report on State vs. Roto and Zekani.
1963	DE AAR	Star, 9 April 1963, report on arrest of five PAC recruiters.
1962-1963	EERSTE RIVER	Contact, December 1966, report on State Mangqangwana and 1.
1962-1963	ELGIN district, Molteno's farm	Cape Argus, 17 September 1963, report on State vs. Melwane and 22.
1966	LAINGSBURG	Cape Times, 9 June 1967, report on State vs. Ndoylo.
1962	PAARL, Mbwekeni location	State vs. Matikela, lawyer's notes, Sachs papers, AS/35, ICS, London; State vs. Makatezi and 20 others, transcript, SAIRR; Snyman Commission, transcript of evidence, CSAS, York University

1961	SOMERSET WEST	State vs. Xintolo, lawyer's notes, Sachs papers, AS 8/14, ICS, London University.
1961	STELLENBOSCH, farms	Cape Times, 28 June 1962, 5 July 1962, report on State vs. Cyrus Tolibode and 20.
1963	STELLENBOSCH, Kaya Mandi location	Star, 9 April 1963, report on arrest of 13.
1966-1967	VICTORIA WEST	Star, 4 September 1968, Daily Despatch, 19 October 1968, Rand Daily Mail, 4 September 1968, Cape Times, reports on unspecified trial of 10.
1962-1963	WELLINGTON, Sakkieskamp.	Cape Argus, 11 July 1963.
	WOLSELEY	Cape Times, 1 May 1963, report on unspecified trial of 57.

NATAL

Dates	Location	Source
1961-1963	DURBAN	Rand Daily Mail, 28 April 1963, report on State vs. Msomi and 3.
1964	DURBAN	Natal Witness, 10 June 1964, report on State vs. Shabalala and 3.
1961-1962	DURBAN, Chesterville township	Rand Daily Mail, 16 July 1964, report on State vs. Mohletshe and 2.
1966	DURBAN	Contact, October 1966, report on State vs. Mbele.
1961-1963	HOWICK	Star, 18 July 1963, report on State vs. Khanyi.
1963	OHLANGA INSTITUTE	Interview with Jordan Ngubane, Karis and Carter microfilms, Reel 13A 2 XN 32: 94.
1965-1966	UMZINTU, Jimbele Compound	Natal Mercury, 1 September 1966, report on State vs. Dlamini.
1963	PIETERMARITZBERG	Rand Daily Mail, 24 August 1963, report on State vs. Msomi and 3.

1966	ESPERENZA, sugar estate	Contact, December 1966, report on unspecified trial of 8 farmworkers which ended in aquittal.

ORANGE FREE STATE

Dates	Location	Source
1960-1965	VIRGINIA district	Star, 2 November 1965, Daily Despatch, 4 November 1965, Contact, April 1966, reports on State vs. Ndoni and 3.
1960-1965	WELKOM	State vs. Tangeni, transcript, SAIRR.
1968	WELKOM	Bloemfontein Friend, 30 July 1971, report on State vs. Lebese; Bloemfontein Friend, 8 September 1971, 14 October 1971, 16 December 1971, reports on State vs. Coetzee and 5.

PRISONS

Dates	Location	Source
1965	BAVIANSPOORT Prison	State vs. Mabuso and 13, transcript, SAIRR; Contact, October 1966, for report on State vs. Bahole and 15.
1966	BELVILLE Prison	Contact, March 1966 and September 1966, reports on trial of 31.
1966	GAMKASPOORT Prison	Contact, January 1966 and April 1966, reports on trial of 30.
1964	LEEUKOP Prison	Contact, March 1965, report on trial of 9; Cape Argus, 7 August 1965, report on third Leeukop trial of 14.

TRANSVAAL

Dates	Location	Source
1963	BENONI, Daveyton	Cape Argus, 21 June 1963, report on State vs. Mlambo and 7.

1961-1963	CARLTONVILLE	Author's interview with former chairman of PAC's Vaal region, David Sibeko.
1961-1963	EVATON	Sibeko interview and The Times (London), 21 October 1963, report on State vs. Sibeko.
1963	EVATON, Wilberforce Institute	Cape Times, 24 June 1963, report on State vs. Mthimunye and 10.
1963	GERMISTON, Natalspruit	Rand Daily Mail, 16 August 1963, report on State vs. Mokoena and 3.
1963-1964	KRUGERSDORP Muncieville	Star, 2 October 1963, report on State vs. Motsoahae and 3; Star, report on State vs. Majadebodu and 14, 1 September 1964.
1962-1963	PRETORIA, Atteridge-ville	State vs. Masemula and 15, transcript, CSAS, York University.
1963	PRETORIA, Atteridge-ville, Hofmeyr High School	Existence of a student branch of PAC mentioned in profile of Ernest Moseneke in Azania News (Dar es Salaam), 27 January 1966.
1963	PRETORIA, Garankua	Rand Daily Mail, 7 August 1963, report on State vs. Magashoa and 2.
1963	PRETORIA, Hebron African Teachers' Training College	Cape Times, 12 April 1964, report on State vs. Malepe and 11.
1961-1963	PRETORIA, Kilnerton High School	Author's interview with Tommy Mohajane.
1963	PRETORIA, Eastwood	State vs. Masemula and 15, transcript.
1963	PRETORIA, Lady Selbourne	State vs. Masemula and 15, transcript; arrests reported in Rand Daily Mail, 22 March 1963.
1963	PRETORIA, Vlakfontein	State vs. Masemula and 15, transcript.
1963	RANDFONTEIN	State vs. Ntsoane, transcript, SAIRR; Rand Daily Mail, 24 July 1963 on State vs. Mbamba and 19.

1963	ROODEPOORT, Dobsonville	Star, 24 May 1963, report on State vs. Pheko.
1961-1963	SASOLBURG	Sibeko interview.
1962	SEKHUKHUNILAND	Existence of a PAC region alleged in an interview with P. K. Leballo, West Africa.

TRANSKEI

Dates	Location	Source
1963	ENGCOBO district	Daily Despatch, 28 August 1963, report on State vs. Mtirara and 36.
1962-1963	ENGCOBO district, Clarkebury Area	Daily Despatch, 28 May 1963, report on State vs. Dlwati and 1; Daily Despatch, 29 May 1963, 31 May 1963, unspecified trial of 24.
1963	GLEN GREY district, Lady Frere, Ngqoka location	State vs. Manisi and 2, transcript, CSAS, York University.
1963	IDUTYWA district	Daily Despatch, 8 April 1963, report on arrests.
1963	KENTANI district, Makiba location	Daily Despatch, 21 June 1963, Star, 18 July 1963, reports on unspecified trial of 20.
1961-1965	MQANDULI district, Jixini, Hoabatshana, Mgumbe, Ngwane and Ntalanga locations	Daily Despatch, 15-19 January 1963, 26 January 1963, Cape Argus, 29 March 1963, for reports on unspecified trial of 15 and three other unspecified trials; State vs. Nikolo and 1, transcript, York University.
1963	NGQELENI district	Daily Despatch, 5 September 1963, 17 September 1963, for reports for unspecified trial of 38 and unspecified trial of 4
1963	ST. MARKS district, Cofimvaba, Qitsi location	Daily Despatch, 14 February 1963, for Poqo involvement in attack on headman.
1962	ST. MARKS district, Cofimvaba, Banzi location	Daily Despatch, 11 January 1963, 15 January 1963, Contact, 31 May 1963, for reports on unspecified trial of 6.

1962	UMTATA district, Baziya location	Star, 16 July 1983, report on unspecified trial of 31.
1962-1963	UMTATA district, Mputi location	Daily Despatch, 31 July to 12 August 1963, reports on State vs. Xhego and 29.
1963	WILLOWVALE district, Msendo location	Daily Despatch, 18 June 1963, report on State vs. Natusela and 2.
1962-1963	WILLOWVALE district, Ntshatshungu location	Daily Despatch, 19 June 1963, report on unspecified trial of 10.

Chapter Four - Notes and References

1. Gail M. Gerhart, Black Power in South Africa, Berkerley: University of California Press, 1978, pp. 225-226.

2. Apart from Gerhart the best published descriptions of Poqo and its development are in: Tom Karis, Gwendoline Carter and Gail Gerhart, From Protest to Challenge, Volume 3, Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1977; Benson, Mary, South Africa: The Struggle for a Birthright, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966; 'Sandor', The Coming Struggle for South Africa, London: Fabian Society, 1962. Z. B. Zwelonke, Robben Island, London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1973, is a novel based on the prison experiences of a Poqo activist.

3. For discussion of Umkonto se Sizwe's organisational structure see Edward Feit, Urban Revolt in South Africa, 1960-1964: a case study, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1971.

4. Evening Post (Port Elizabeth), 28 March 1967.

5. 'On the meaning of Poqo', interpreter's note, Albie Sachs papers, AS 31/19, ICS, University of London. In Albert Knopf, Kaffir-English Dictionary, Lovedale Missionary Press, Alice, 1913, the meaning of Poqo is given as 'completely (adv.), a religious denomination that refuses to have anything to do with white men (noun)'.

6. 'Poqo' is used in the slogan ending a letter in Xhosa written by P. Z. Joli to Meshack Mampunye, secretary, Kensington PAC branch in October 1959. Karis and Carter microfilm, Reel 6B, 2 DPI : 41/10.

7. Govan Mbeki, 'An Unholy Alliance', New Age, 3 August 1961.

8. See Tom Lodge, Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, London: Longman, pp. 210-223.

9. Regina vs. Synod Madlebe and 31, Case no. 313/60, transcript and lawyer's notes, Albie Sachs papers, AS 31.

10. See for example notes on speeches by C. Mlokoti on 3 March 1959 and W. Phuza on 11 October 1959, AS 31/6.1 and AS 31/6.4 in Albie Sachs papers.

11. Lodge, ibid.

12. Report of evidence submitted to Snyman Commission by Frank Barton, Cape Town editor of Drum magazine in Cape Argus, 12 March 1963.

13. Howard Lawrence, 'Poqo - we go it alone' in Fighting Talk (Johannesburg), Vol. 17, no. 2, February 1963, pp. 4-6. This account may seem to be slightly romanticised but there is evidence that recent events in the Congo were discussed in at least one Poqo cell in Cape Town in 1961 (see evidence of state witness Sontekwa in State vs. Mandla and 31 others, defence lawyer's notebooks, Albie Sachs papers, AS 69/7).

14. State vs. Mandla and 31 others, statements by accused nos. 21 and 23, AS 69/8 and Regina vs. Synod Madlebe, AS 31/11.

15. Author's interview with Randolph Vigne, London, 1975.

16. State vs. Mandla and 31 others, statements by accused nos. 14 and 23, AS 69/8.

17. Contact, 16 April 1960.

18. State vs. Mandla and 31 others, defence lawyer's notebooks, AS 69/7.

19. Contact, 29 November 1962.

20. Drum's report (February 1963) mentions an inaugural meeting in August 1961 by 750 Poqo activists in a hall between Paarl and Wellington, very near Mbekweni. I have come across no other reports to confirm this and it is not mentioned by Snyman in his Report of the Commission appointed to inquire into the events on the 20th to 22nd November, 1962, at Paarl, RP 51/1963.

21. 'Sobukwe was Poqo leader', report in Cape Times, 4 March 1963, on Queenstown trial of men involved in unsuccessful assassination attempt on Chief Matanzima.

22. See Lodge, op. cit., pp. 283-290.

23. As in the case of the men who belonged to the Poqo cell at the Jewish Old Age Home in Cape Town.

24. State vs. Matikila and 3 others, March 1962, defence lawyer's notebook, Albie Sachs papers, AS 35/5.

25. State vs. Budaza and 3 others, August 1963, Albie Sachs papers, AS 70.

26. State vs. Xintolo, n. d. defence lawyer's notes on evidence, Albie Sachs papers, AS 83/14.

27. Cape Times reports of the trial, 28 June 1962 and 5 July 1962.

28. Cape Argus, 17 September 1963.

29. Quoted in Rand Daily Mail, 23 March 1963.

30. Cape Times, 28 June 1962.

31. Snyman proceedings, p. 348. Transcript of proceedings of Snyman Commission, CAMP microfilm held at University of York.

32. Report on trial of men involved in Matanzima assassination attempt, Cape Times, 4 March 1963.

33. Snyman proceedings, p. 329. Evidence of state witness X3 (evidence is remarkably detailed and suggests careful rehearsal of witness beforehand).

34. Cape Times, 28 June 1962 and Snyman proceedings, p. 38.

35. Ibid., p. 271.

36. Ibid., p. 297.

37. Cape Times, 5 July 1962 and 28 June 1962.

38. 'Leballo did not escape' in Cape Times, 15 August 1962.

39. Snyman proceedings, p. 283.

40. Draft of an article based upon an interview with Leballo in Maseru dated 24 March 1963 on microfilm of South African political documentation held at School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

41. The police refused to arrest the Evaton PAC leaders when they presented themselves at the police station on 21 March 1960. They subsequently obeyed police instructions to disperse the crowd. Z. B. Molete was tried for incitement in November and was fined £60. See Regina vs. Majake, Ncomane and Molete, transcript, p. 172, held at South African Institute of Race Relations.

42. State vs. Z. B. Melete, case no. 9/1962, transcript, exhibit DD, p. 341. SAIRR.

43. Though according to Mthimunye, one of the accused in a trial in 1963 in Pretoria (RDM 21 June 1963) the decision to abandon a non-violent strategy followed Z. B. Molete's assumption of control.

44. Contact, 31 November 1960.

45. State vs. Z. B. Molete, transcript, p. 15.

46. See Jordan Ngubane, An African Explains Apartheid, New York: Praeger, 1962.

47. Author's interview with Matthew Nkoana, London, 1975.

48. Ibid.

49. State vs. Z. B. Molete, transcript, pp. 89-90.

50. 'Let the People Know'. Leaflet signed by James Mangqekwana of Main Barracks, Langa. Patrick Duncan Papers, 8. 42. 9, University of York.

51. Report on evidence to the Snyman Commission, Cape Argus, 12 March 1963.

52. Nkoana interview. The BOSS defector Gordon Winter suggests that Nkoana was still in South Africa in July 1964 working as a 'secret police agent'. Apart from his own testimony all the available evidence (for example the document cited in note 57 below) suggests this was not the case: for most of 1964 Nkoana was representing the PAC in Cairo after a period spent in what was then Bechuanaland. Winter's book includes a mass of unreliable detail on the PAC and the ANC and should be treated with great reserve by researchers. See Gordon Winter, Inside BOSS, Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1981, p. 94.

53. Nkoana interview.

54. State vs. G. S. Neconga, RC 37/65, transcript held at SAIRR, p. 44 and p. 96.

55. It seems that the decision was made independently of leaders still in prison. See note 136.

56. Because Leballo, the son of a South African Anglican priest, had been born in his father's parish at Mafeteng, Basutoland, he was entitled to Basotho nationality and residence. He was therefore permitted by the Native Commissioner at Ubumbu, Kwa Zulu, to leave his place of banishment to live in Basutoland. Cape Times, 15 August 1962.

57. Potlake Leballo and John Pokela, 'Background to Official Appointments and Policy Statement', Maseru, 20 June 1964, mimeo, Anthony Steel papers, private collection, London.

58. West Africa (London), 3 November 1962.

59. Patrick Duncan, 'Gathering Darkness in South Africa', The Times (London), 6 May 1963.

60. Africa Confidential (London), 15 February 1963.

61. National Executive Committee Report to the 1st Annual Conference of the PAC, 19-20 December 1959, Karis and Carter microfilms, Reel 6B, 2: DPI: 979/23.

62. The Africanist (Orlando), November 1959.

63. See Lodge, op. cit., p. 215.

64. The claim was made in court. See Regina vs. Majake, Neumane and Molete, 1960, transcript, p. 94, SAIRR.

65. Research for this currently in progress. Relevant factors include a very fragmented history of political organisation in the area prior to the launching of the local PAC and in particular the failure of ANC activists to capitalise on the trade union organisation accomplished by Communists during the 1940s; unrest in Pretoria's African high schools from 1960 onwards; freehold township removals which had a peculiarly disruptive effect in Pretoria on black communities; and the existence of a relatively substantial group of middle-class professional people (especially teachers) not involved in the ANC. All these contributed to the existence of a space in which the PAC could operate.

66. Cape Argus, 21 June 1963.

67. State vs. Masemula and 15, 1963, transcript, CSAS, University of York. Also author's interview with Tommy Mohajane, York, 1975.

68. Cape Times, 12 April 1964.

69. State vs. Letsoko and 4, 1963, transcript, SAIRR.

70. The Star, 24 May 1963.

71. Author's interview with David Sibeko, London, 1976.

72. R. Tunmer and R. K. Muir, Some Aspects of Education in South Africa.

73. Interview with Potlake Leballo, 9 March 1964, Karis and Carter microfilm, Reel IIA, 2: 91; Interview with Peter 'Molotsi, 10 August 1963, Karis and Carter microfilm, Reel 10A, 2: XM: 120: 94.

74. Interview with Jordan Ngubane, Reel 13A, Karis and Carter microfilm, 2: N24: 91.

75. According to a draft of an article by Benjamin Pogrund dated 16 January 1960, microfilm of South African Political Documentation held at SOAS, University of London, M 749.

76. The persistence of PAC efforts to organise in Welkom might be attributable to the passage of migrants between the Free State goldfields and Lesotho which may have facilitated contact between exiles in Maseru and PAC supporters in Welkom.

77. The Friend (Bloemfontein), 30 July 1971.

78. State vs. Mtshizana, 1963, SAIRR transcript.

79. Author's interview with Neshtedi Sidzamba, Maseru, 1976.

80. The Star, 9 April 1963.

81. Rand Daily Mail, 17 May 1963.

82. According to an exile PAC publication, Black Star (London), May 1963, 57 PAC suspects were arrested in Herschel but I have found no trial evidence to indicate Herschel as a centre of PAC activity.

83. Daily Despatch, 28 August 1963 and 31 August 1963.

84. PAC Newsletter (Maseru), 15 May 1965.

85. Contact, 27 November 1964.

86. Rand Daily Mail, 14 June 1963.

87. Evening Post, 24 June 1966.

88. He gave state evidence at the trial of the Kingwilliamstown group. Daily Despatch, 4 September 1963.

89. Daily Despatch, 28 August 1963.

90. State vs. Neconga and 3, transcript, SAIRR.

91. State vs. Z. B. Molete, 1962, transcript, p. 88, SAIRR. Nkoana and Molete sent Fazzio copies of Mafube for distribution.

92. Daily Despatch, 27 April 1963.

93. State vs. C. V. Mugaza, 1967, transcript, University of York.

94. Except in Glen Grey, then adjacent to the Transkei but not part of it.

95. See Table A.

96. For example, nearly eighty people were accused in a series of trials in December 1962 or organising meetings attended by over six hundred people in Ngwana, Ntalanga, and Mgombe locations, Mqanduli district. Daily Despatch, 19 January 1963.

97. Author's interview with David Sibeko.

98. See State vs. Masemula and 15, transcript, pp. 269-272.

99. See State vs. Neconga and 3, transcript p. 13.

100. State vs. Jairus Ntsoane, case no. 295/63, transcript, p. 54, SAIRR.

101. Ibid., pp. 54-66.

102. Ibid., exhibit Y, pp. 271-278.

103. Rand Daily Mail, 23 May 1964. Report on State vs. Nkosi and 3. Here a state witness testified that the Witwatersrand area was the least prepared for the April uprising. Rand Daily Mail, 21 June 1963, report on State vs. Mthimunye and 10. The accused claimed that as a member of the Wits. regional committee he had opposed Leballo's conception of an uprising.

104. State vs. Jairus Ntsoane, exhibit M, p. 242.

105. State vs. Neconga and 3, p. 53 and p. 102.

106. Ibid., p. 13.

107. Daily Despatch, 14 February 1963.

108. Ibid., 23 February 1963.

109. Ibid., 12 February 1963.

110. This was the case, for example, with the group at Mputi location, Umtata district, responsible for the Bashee Bridge killings. Daily Despatch, 3 December 1963.

111. Nkoana believes that by 1962 the national leadership was no longer in control of the movement in the Cape. Nkoana interview.

112. See, for example, State vs. Siyothula, report in Cape Argus, 23 December 1967 and 13 November 1967.

113. State vs. Jairus Ntsoane, exhibit G, 'Urgent Warning', 13 February 1963, signed by M. G. Macdonald.

114. Examples: State vs. Letsaka and 4, transcript, p. 1550, and report on State vs. Mgoqi and 9, Daily Despatch, 13 November 1963.

115. State vs. Neconga and 4, transcript, p. 13.

116. Ibid., p. 20.

117. State vs. Jairus Ntsoane, transcript, p. 52.

118. Ibid., p. 79.

119. State vs. Mtshizana, transcript, p. 296.

120. For example, see State vs. Masemula, transcript, pp. 166-167.

121. Ibid., p. 232.

122. Examples: State vs. Mtshizana (Lovedale), p. 295; Rand Daily Mail report, 20 August 1963 on State vs. Nqobo and 32 (King Williamstown); Rand Daily Mail report, 16 August 1963, State vs. Mokoena and 3 (Germiston).

123. For example: State vs. Neconga and 3, transcript, p. 6.

124. Z. B. Zwelonke's novel, Robben Island, describes the Poqo men imprisoned on the island cherishing the hope that:

> 'the five to eight year, and nine to fifteen or life sentences would wither away when that man in the lonely house (Sobukwe) decided to act.' (p. 40)

Sobukwe

> 'never pushed us from the rear but led us from the front like a good shepherd' (p. 106)

125. Report on Sibeko's trial, The Times (London), 21 October 1963.

126. The Star, 4 May 1963.

127. Ibid., 30 March 1963.

128. Jack Halpern, South Africa's Hostages, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965, pp. 26-31; Patrick Duncan, 'South Africa: How Britain Helped Verwoerd's Police', Tribune (London), 26 April 1963.

129. Affidavit by P. Gqobose before Commissioner of Oaths, Maseru, 17 April 1963, Anthony Steel Papers. For what it is worth, Gordon Winter claims that the British authorities did not pass information to the South Africans. His version of the incident has it that Leballo compiled a list of 4,000 PAC members and these had been obtained by a South African intelligence agent, Hans Lombard, with whom Leballo had developed a friendship. The Duncan Papers indicate the existence of Lombard, who, by 1964, was widely believed to be a South African spy and who had enjoyed Leballo's confidence. Perhaps on this occasion Winter may be correct. But this does not rule out the possibility of British complicity with the South Africans.

130. Race Relations News, June 1963.

131. Daily Despatch, 28 August 1963.

132. Ibid., 28 October 1963 to 19 November 1963.

133. State vs. Napoleon Letsoko and 4, transcript.

134. Sibeko interview.

135. The Star, 21 and 23 October 1963.

136. Author's interview with A. B. Ngcobo, London, 1975. Benjamin Pogrund in an article in the Rand Daily Mail, 'The Paradox of Robert Sobukwe' (26 April 1969), describes Sobukwe as a 'firm believer in non-violent political action'.

137. Cape Times, 13 June 1966.

138. Rand Daily Mail, 23 May 1964, The Star, 20 May 1964, 21 May 1964, 12 June 1964.

139. State vs. Manisi and 2, case no. 326/63, transcript, CSAS, York University.

140. Natal Witness, 10 June 1964, report on Shabala and 3; Daily Despatch, 1 April 1969, report on State vs. Loliwe and 3; Contact, May 1965, State vs. Mkhalipi and 3.

141. The Star, 16 March 1965.

142. Rand Daily Mail, 19 March 1965.

143. Arrangements concerning the purchase of a second hand motor torpedo boat are detailed in the Patrick Duncan Papers, 8. 48. 61. A plan for a Basutoland-based insurgency in the Transkei is discussed in correspondence in January 1963 between Duncan and the Maseru group (Patrick Duncan Papers, 8. 43. 6). Duncan discussed the plan with Robert Kennedy in Washington later that year. See C. J. Driver, Patrick Duncan, South African, Pan African, London: Heinemann, 1980, p. 229.

144. The Star, 13 February 1967.

145. State vs. Alex Nikelo and 1, transcript, CSAS, York.

146. Cape Times, 27 April 1965.

147. Contact, July 1965.

148. Contact, December 1966.

149. Africa Confidential, 9 May 1965; Contact, May 1965, New African (London), June 1965; Cape Times, 13 March 1965.

150. PAC Newsletter, Maseru, 15 May 1965.

151. Evening Post, 15 and 16 February 1966; Eastern Province Herald, 2 April 1966.

152. Cape Times, 6 May 1967.

153. Ibid., 9 June 1967.

154. Eastern Province Herald, 2 December 1970.

155. The Star, 4 September 1968; Daily Despatch, 19 October 1968.

156. Evening Post, 24 June 1966.

157. Ibid., 16 February 1966 and 23 June 1966.

158. Natal Mercury, 1 September 1966.

159. Contact, December 1966.

160. Contact, January 1966.

161. State vs. Mabuse and 13, transcript, SAIRR.

162. Contact, March 1966.

163. Cape Argus, 7 August 1965.

164. Eastern Province Herald, 2 and 15 December 1970.

165. The Star, 5 July 1969 and 2 August 1969.

166. Cape Times, 3 October 1968.

167. Cape Times, 9 June 1967.

168. Feit, op. cit., p. 17.

169. Fatima Meer, 'African Nationalism, Some Inhibiting Factors' in H. Adam (ed.), South Africa: Sociological Perspectives, London, Arnold, 1971.

170. Ibid., p. 140.

171. Feit, op. cit., p. 90.

172. See, for example, Neil Smelser, 'Mechanisms of Change and Adjustment to Change', in B. F. Hoselitz and W. E. Moore, Industrialization and Society, Paris: Mouton, 1966.

173. Ted Gurr, Rogues, Rebels and Reformers: A Political History of Crime and Conflict, Sage: Beverley Hills, 1976, pp. 82-90.

174. See, for example, the Snyman Commission Report (RP 51/1963), paras. 161-165.

175. See, for example, SAIRR, Report by the Director on Visits to Port Elizabeth, East London and Kimberley in connection with the riots, RR 9/53, 12 January 1953.

176. George Rude, The Crowd in the French Revolution, Oxford: OUP, 1959.

177. E. G. Hobsbawm and George Rude, Captain Swing, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973.

178. Charles, Louis and Richard Tilly, The Rebellious Century, London: Dent, 1975.

179. Ibid., p. 85.

180. See Charles van Onselen, Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand, Volume 2, Johannesburg: Ravan, 1982, pp. 54-60.

181. Tillys, op. cit., p. 52.

182. cf. E. J. Hobsbawm, Primitive Rebels, Manchester: University Press, 1978, pp. 57-58.

183. State vs. Fundile Maseko, EC/5/66, transcript, CSAS, University of York. Out of a black population of 200 sixty men were said to have belonged to Poqo.

184. Daily Despatch, 7 March 1963.

185. Ibid., 23 April 1963.

186. Ibid., 21 May 1963.

187. Ibid., 9 May 1963.

188. Ibid., 21 May 1963.

189. cf. Hobsbawm, op. cit., Chapter VI for a study of the Sicilian Fascii, an illustration of the 'complete process by which a primitive social movement is absorbed into a wholly modern one'. (p. 93)

190. For example: Raymond Mhlaba. For biographical details of this Umkonto leader's early career see Lodge, op. cit., pp. 51-53.

191. K. Danziger, 'The Psychological Future of an Oppressed Group', Social Forces, October 1963, pp. 31-40.

192. E. A. Brett, African Attitudes, SAIRR, Johannesburg, 1963.

193. Tillys, op. cit., p. 70.

194. Tom Lodge, 'The Parents' School Boycott', B. Bozzoli (ed.), Town and Countryside in the Transvaal, Johannesburg: Ravan, 1983, pp. 370-372.

195. Colin Bundy, 'Resistance in the Reserves: the AAC and the Transkei', Africa Perspective, no. 22, 1983, p. 58.

196. Karis and Carter microfilm, Reel 11A, 2: XM: 26: 94.

197. Inkundla ya Bantu, 7 May 1949, p. 5.

198. Gerhart, op. cit., pp. 15-16. In fairness to Gerhart it should be conceded that the PAC's Matthew Nkoana also has attributed a psychological function to Poqo violence:

> . . . they had to prove not so much to others as to themselves that they in fact could do things . . . they had to divest themselves of fear, the almost inexplicable fear engendered by the power that was symbolised by the white colour.

Matthew Nkoana, 'The end to non-violence', The New African, March 1963.

199. See Ghita Ionescu and Ernest Gellner (eds.), Populism, London: Weidenfield and Nicholson, London, 1969, p. 156, for the distinction.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE PAARL UPRISING

At half past two, early in the morning of Thursday, November 22nd, 1962, 250 men carrying axes, pangas and various self-made weapons left the Mbekweni location and marched on Paarl. On the outskirts of the city the marchers formed two groups, one destined for the prison where the intention was to release prisoners, the other to make an attack on the police station. Before the marchers reached Paarl's boundaries, the police had already been warned of their approach by a bus driver. Police patrols were sent out and one of these encountered the marchers in Paarl's Main Street. Having lost the advantage of surprise, the marchers in Main Street began to throw stones at cars, shop windows and any police vans which they came across on their way to the police station. The police at the station were armed with sten guns and rifles in anticipation of the attack. At ten minutes past four between seventy-five and a hundred men advanced on the station throwing stones. When the attackers came within twenty-five yards of the station they were fired upon and two of them were immediately killed. The marchers then broke up into smaller groups and several were arrested or shot during their retreat. Some of the men who had taken part in the assault on Paarl police station met up in Loop Street with the group that was marching on the prison. These men regrouped and embarked on an attack on the inhabitants of Loop Street. Three houses and two people in the street were attacked: a seventeen year old girl and a

young man were killed and four other people were wounded. According to police evidence, five insurgents were killed and fourteen were wounded. By five o'clock, the Paarl uprising was over; police reinforcements had arrived from Cape Town and the men from Mbekweni were in full retreat.

This chapter has two purposes. One is to provide an analysis of the causes of the Paarl disturbance. In the literature on black South African opposition movements, the events in Paarl are scarcely mentioned. This is at least partly because the participants were not politically very sophisticated or articulate; they are consequently difficult to write about. But the neglect of the events in Paarl is also attributable to a bias in much of the relevant scholarship: the emphasis of historical studies has been on black ideological response and has tended to focus on the most fluent articulants of black aspirations. There is a tendency for the history of black South African opposition to be intellectual history and to concern itself with the thoughts, responses and actions of an elite group.[1] The popular dimension of protest is ignored or subjected to vague generalisations. However, though the Paarl events have only received cursory attention from academic writers, they were the subject of a government-appointed commission of inquiry. The incident after all involved a politically inspired insurrection taking place in the heart of an important regional town and directed against state forces.

The Snyman Commission report,[2] reflecting as it does the official ideological concerns of the time, has various shortcomings. The report concludes that there were two basic factors in the unrest at Paarl. First there were the problems stemming

from inadequacies in the municipal administration. These included: deficiencies in consultative machinery; neglect of African affairs by the Paarl Town Council; the prevalence of corruption among location officials; cultural problems of 'modernisation' among the migrant community and the lack of any sympathetic guidance in a 'strange urban setting'; division of responsibility between the municipal and South African police forces; the mistreatment of the location's population by the municipal police. Most of the popular resentment in Paarl, claimed Snyman, was against municipal as opposed to state agencies. This situation, Snyman argued, provided a fertile environment for the spread of influence of the Pogo movement. Snyman declared that there was a direct correlation in meaning between the titles Pogo and Pan Africanist Congress: both were names for the same organisation. In the report Pogo is viewed as part of a national conspiracy also involving 'communists' and 'white liberals'. Snyman placed great emphasis on the atavistic, coercive and irrational characteristics of the organisation in its local context. The motivation of many Pogo activists, it is alleged, can be traced to their individual ambitions: they were men of little traditional status who in consequence repudiated and challenged traditional political hierarchies. Snyman went on to argue that actions directed against 'bantu people' (and their chiefs) formed a more important part of Pogo activities than 'crimes directed against the state or whites'.

Snyman, therefore portrayed Pogo as a fairly elaborate conspiracy, through which local conditions were exploited to further the purpose of, on the one hand, people whose personal

political ambitions were not being promoted by the Bantustan structure, and on the other, a national political strategy devised by the Pan Africanist Congress leadership in Maseru and their allies, the white liberals and communists. The conditions Pogo sought to exploit were ones that were fairly easy to remedy with reforms that in any case coincided with requirements of government ideology. What was needed was more centralised administration with a policy for:

> '. . . the regulating of the influx of the Bantu people from their homelands into the industrial areas and the concomitant social difficulties to which it gives rise.' 3

Social difficulties which would include:

> '. . . In the circumstances some resistance from the Urban Bantu. . . . It requires special effort to persuade them that these schemes are not intended to be oppressive but are based on social and economic needs; and that it is for the good of all that a mode of living must be evolved whereby all sections of the people can live in harmony and prosperity. The men to administer such a policy must be specially trained for the work.' 4

On formulating these conclusions Snyman chose to disregard evidence submitted to the South African Institute of Race Relations. Their counsel argued that first and foremost, dissatisfaction at Paarl derived from the migrant labour system and the way of life that evolved from it, as well as the threat to remove Africans from the Western Cape altogether. These basic causes of insecurity were aggravated by a particularly harsh and corrupt local administration. As far as the political movement was concerned, the majority of Pogo members did not have to be coerced into membership but joined voluntarily.[5]

Much of what is to follow will bear out the SAIRR's analysis. However, a detailed study of the Paarl riots has an additional function to that of offering an alternative interpretation to that provided by a fairly tendentious government document. This brings us to the second purpose of this chapter. This is to make a modest empirical contribution to a current debate on the sociology of liberation. In an influential article by Archie Mafeje, political responses of migrant workers are explained with reference to the partial nature of their proletarianisation:

> '. . . it may be pointed out that the fact that the families of migrants are back in the countryside, does create an important structural predisposition. When confronted with a situation such as Soweto, the first thing that migrants think of are their families back at home and their hopes materially. Therefore, the decision to strike does not come easily to them. It is even worse when we call to mind that in accordance with their traditions every decision is an outcome of long and tedious deliberations by all concerned. This is a far way cry from the instantaneous and precipitous reactions of urban youth.' 6

The stereotyped view of migrant workers as a politically apathetic and conservative force has been a common one among historians of South African protest. For example, in Karis, Carter and Gerhart's From Protest to Challenge it is asserted that most Poqo members in the Western Cape were drawn from the young unemployed sons of African middle class and working class families that had lived in urban centres from the 1920s. Poqo activists, apparently, had tremendous difficulty in mobilising migrant 'countrymen', who resenting being 'terrorised' used to report Poqo organisers to the police.[7] Just where this

information is derived from is not clear, but the overwhelming weight of evidence suggests a very different situation. For example, if one looks at the careers of the thirty-two men convicted of plotting an uprising while working at the Jewish Old Age Home in Cape Town in 1963 one sees that their ages varied between 21 and 63 but that most were in their thirties, that over half the accused were married with their dependents living in the Transkei and that with four exceptions all had been born in the Transkei, mainly in the Tsolo district. The majority had first come to work in Cape Town during the 1950s.[8] Or, to take another major Poqo trial, there was the group in Langa who took part in an attempt to assassinate Chief Kaiser Matanzima: most of the twenty men lived in the Langa single men's accommodation and had families in the Transkei.[9]

Detailed local case studies of the activities and social context of political movements help to correct mechanistic assumptions about the political behaviour of certain social groups. They also help to show us how ideological formulations are interpreted at a popular level. The historiography of African nationalism has tended to be the study of intellectual traditions with little effort made to examine the ways in which political ideas are understood at the social base of a political movement. For these reasons a study of the revolt of the men from the hostels at Mbekweni seems worthwhile.

The uprising apart, Paarl during the late 1950s and early 1960s had a turbulent history. There were four important previous occasions when black resentment of authority crystallised into open confrontation. In mid-1959 there was a demonstration

in Paarl against the issue of women's passes which apparently had the effect of delaying the local application of the law which required all African female employees to hold passes.[10] A few months later, in November 1959, rioting broke out in the suburb of Huguenot. Thousands of people, both African and Coloured, stoned cars, burnt and damaged shops and attacked Whites. One person died in the riot. The crowds were reacting to a Government banning order which had been imposed on Elizabeth Mafeking, a Paarl resident and the president of the African Food and Canning Workers Union. These disturbances were followed a month later by tension in Mbekweni location: on several occasions municipal police were attacked during early morning searches for illegal visitors and an unsuccessful attempt was made to set on fire the location's administrative offices.[11] The following year, Paarl was one of the few urban centres in which there was a response to the Pan Africanist Congress's anti-pass campaign. Passes were destroyed and a school in the Mbekweni location was burnt down.[12]

Paarl was not a very large town and its African population was small; the unusual intensity of opposition to the authorities is at first sight rather startling. For an understanding of the tensions that underlay these recurrent confrontations a knowledge of the development and changes in the town's economy and social structure is helpful.

Paarl lies in the heart of the Boland region, a rich agricultural area traditionally dominated by fruit growing and viniculture. The orchards and vineyards extend well inside the municipal boundaries to the middle of the town. Paarl is

one of the earliest centres of white settlement in South African and with its population of 52,000 in 1961 the main town of its region. From the end of the second world war onwards Paarl experienced considerable industrial expansion both in its traditional industrial sector which had developed out of local farming activities, the fruit canning, wine and brandy and tobacco industries, and with more recent manufacturing which had no links with local agriculture. The late 1940s and 1950s saw the establishment of jute spinning, plastics, light engineering, textiles and packaging concerns[13] so that by 1962 the total labour force employed in the 102 factories in Paarl numbered 7,000.[14] Paarl's population, according to Snyman, was composed of 17,000 whites, 30,000 coloureds and 5,000 blacks.[15] Since 1950 the Black population had undergone an important structural change. Whereas at the beginning of the decade roughly two thousand African families had lived in and around Paarl, during the 1950s the number of families had been systematically reduced, so that by 1962 Paarl's population included only four hundred families[16] and 2,200 migrant workers, who were housed in the Mbekweni hostels.[17]

Let us look at the changing situation of the African community in Paarl a little more closely. Until the post-war period the municipality had had a negligible African population and no official arrangements had been made for black housing. Labour in the traditional industries was seasonal and the labour force and their families tended to squat on farm land surrounding the town providing an additional source of income for local farmers.[18] However, by 1950 the dimensions of the squatter population had begun to disturb the municipal authorities.

Paarl had been one of the last towns to be proclaimed under the Urban Areas Act and for this reason had attracted a large squatter population composed of the families of farm labourers employed in the Boland.[19] The squatters were concentrated in four camps: Huguenot, Suider Paarl, Klein Drakenstein and Dal Josephat. In 1950 with Paarl's proclamation under the terms of the Act the Municipality assumed control of African housing. The land the squatters occupied was destined for industrial development.[20] The authorities were to rehouse the squatter population in two locations, both quite close to each other but over four miles from the town. The main location was Mbekweni, constructed on 1951. Mbekweni consisted of four blocks of barracks divided into rooms, each room intended to house six men. Each block had separate communal kitchens and washrooms. The blocks were furnished with beds and cement floors as well as an entrance at each end (but no interior doors).[21] In addition to these 'single men's hostels' Mbekweni had a group of small houses sufficient to accommodate thirty families. The two thousand odd single men paid R2,20 a month, and the family units were rented at R4,40 a month. The rents, together with other revenue derived from the black population, paid for the costs of constructing and financing the location.[22]

Langabuya was rather a different scheme. Designated as an 'emergency camp' it was intended to house, on a temporary basis, those people who could not be sent to the Mbekweni single quarters. Consequently, most of the squatters were moved to Langabuya with their families. Langabuya was a 'site and service'

scheme; in other words the municipality provided refuse collection but little else. In the squatter camps, before their homes were demolished, people were told they would be given building materials in Langabuya. These did not appear apparently and people had to buy them.[23] But quite apart from the expense of building new homes (and inferior ones at that) the move was to involve long term costs. Langabuya's inhabitants had to pay R1,00 a month ground rent: previously they had paid no rent or had occupied very cheap houses near the coloured township in Suider Paarl. Langabuya's 1,200 inhabitants were going to wait a long time for proper houses: the municipality only began to provide family accommodation for more than a handful of people in the mid-1960s. In the meantime it was a squalid, miserable place of tin shacks exposed to the wind on the top of a ridge. Despite this, it had certain advantages over Mbekweni for those who lived there. In comparison to the neighbouring location it was less easy for the municipal authorities to control and for that reason a high proportion of those who lived there did so without permits and passes.[24] The demolition of the squatters camps proceeded in fits and starts through the 1950s and was bitterly resented and in some cases resisted. The first removals took place in the winter: people's houses were flattened by tractors and the families were taken in trucks and dumped out in the open. The first camp to be subjected to this treatment was at Dal Josephat: many people from there were to join the African National Congress.[25]

There was a special reason in Paarl why the move into municipally-owned rented accommodation from private (and

sometimes free) housing would be a recurrent source of bitterness. Much of the employment in Paarl was seasonal: the canning factories, the wine and brandy industry, and the farms had sharply fluctuating labour requirements throughout the year. The canning industry, in Paarl the single largest employer of African labour, only hired most of its workforce for a third of the year, during the summer. This meant that its employees could be assured of a steady income for only about four months. The rest of the time they had to rely on casual farm work. Opportunities for this were becoming increasingly limited in the course of the decade by the extension of the prison farm system around Paarl. In addition, because of mechanisation, the canning season was becoming shorter. Seasonal canning workers had been excluded from the Unemployment Insurance Act in 1949. It is not surprising, therefore, that many people found it very difficult to keep up with their rent payments. The authorities retaliated by arranging with employers for the arrears to be deducted from pay packets during the peak employment period. Sometimes municipal police would actually visit factories and arrest rent defaulters.[26]

Insecurity was not limited to economic issues. The 1950s was a period in which the state was in a process of tightening its control over labour mobility and implementing the first stages of a programme to expand and elaborate the migrant labour system.[27] For ideological reasons, the Western Cape, an area in which blacks represented a relatively small proportion of the population, was to receive the first impact of the programme. Its effects were felt in Paarl quite early in the decade. In

1955 women whose husbands had not lived in Paarl for fifteen years (and who therefore did not qualify for permanent residence) began to be endorsed out and sent to the Transkei.[28] Men who, in the slack season, registered as unemployed were told to send their wives away and move into the Mbekweni hostels.[29] Women in Paarl, as mentioned above, did manage quite successfully to resist the implementation of the pass laws. This was all the more remarkable in the light of what was happening in the nearby Cape Peninsula where the process of regulating the presence of black women was energetically begun in 1953.[30] The existence of a strong trade union with many black and coloured women members may have helped. However, by 1960, with the government banning of Mrs. Mafeking, an important women's movement leader, as well as the proscription of the Women's League along with Congress, the battle had been lost. In 1962, the Mapheele case was to assume a considerable local symbolic importance, as an especially heartless example of official interference in African family life.[31] The case involved the expulsion of a young wife from Paarl who had been living all her married life illegally in Langabuya while her husband was compelled to stay in a hostel at Mbekweni. Apparently quite a lot of 'single' men of Mbekweni had their wives living in the nearby 'temporary' camps in constant fear of official harassment. There was also a considerable number of men who had not obtained passes and lived an anxious existence hiding in the bushes near the banks of the Berg river.[32]

In 1962 there was an added ingredient to people's worries with the onset of a well-publicised debate concerning the total removal of Africans from the Western Cape in conformity with a

Government policy that had been first elaborated in 1955. Despite the fact that influx control in the Western Cape had been extremely stringent since that time and had been accompanied, as we have seen, by a systematic restructuring of the African community into a largely migrant population, this apparently was not enough. In August, Verwoerd announced the formation of a special action committee to stimulate employers to replace their unskilled black labourers with coloured workers (who were at that time mainly employed in skilled capacities). The programme was justified in economic terms with the argument that it would encourage employers to mechanise and in so doing to raise productivity.[33] In October 1962 a concerted drive was begun in the African townships in Cape Town to send African women to the Transkei.[34] Paarl employers, despite their political sympathies, did not favour the government policy. They maintained that quite apart from being cheaper, African labour was more productive and efficient than coloured labour.[35] Most of the labour force, both on the farms and in the factories, was African.

The implications of the policy were probably fairly clear to the African community in Paarl. Employers worries would have probably filtered down, there was plenty of press coverage to the debate, and both the Mapheele case and the Langa and Nyanga expulsions in October 1962 would have aroused fears. Two of the Poqo members who gave evidence to the commission mention the proposed removals as a source of general anxiety, as did other witnesses.[36]

Let us summarise the situation as it had evolved by 1962. In Paarl there existed a fairly small black community which

within the previous decade had experienced an exceptionally sharp decline in its economic prosperity and social security. Black people had lost the degree of independence they had enjoyed in deciding where they should live: for many this loss represented a significant rise in the cost of living with the move into municipal accommodation. Many families were no longer permitted to live together. Seasonal workers were finding that their opportunities for employment during the slack period had diminished while their economic obligations had increased. And in 1962, with the removals debate, even migrant labourers were confronted with the threatened prospect of being thrown back into the pool of landless and unemployed in the reserves. To an extent these were factors which were common to all urban black communities in South Africa. However in the Western Cape towns the effects of overall tendencies in the development of South Africa's political economy were magnified and exaggerated by ruling class ideological preoccupations. And in a small community, such as Paarl's, the structural changes would have been especially obvious to the people experiencing them.

A major source of tension was provided by the venal behaviour of the municipal administration. Considerable attention was paid to this in the Snyman report. The Director of Bantu Administration at Paarl (a post appointed by the Town Council) was a former police sergeant in the Transkei, J. H. le Roux. Le Roux had held the post since the inception of municipal administration of the African population in 1950. Evidence was submitted to the Commission which suggested that for a very long time, both le Roux and a black colleague, the senior clerk Wilson Mgcukana, had been using their power for

private purposes. Accusations included the selling of passes, endorsing out of men to create employment vacancies for which passes could be sold, the employment of those who could not afford the going rate of twenty rands per pass on le Roux's private farms, the enforcement of substantial fines for trivial infringements of regulations, and various instances of brutal behaviour by municipal employees.[37] Le Roux had actually been charged and tried for corruption in 1960: his subsequent acquittal provoked great dissatisfaction.[38] During the trial le Roux apparently succeeded in bribing or intimidating many of those witnesses who were supposed to appear against him.[39] People were completely powerless to act against le Roux: it was believed that a complaint to the authorities could easily result in the withdrawal of official permission to live and work in the area.[40] A report made during le Roux's temporary suspension in 1960 noted an 'unprecedented degree of hostility to location officials' as well as an ebullient attitude among Africans in Mbekweni: 'they now regard themselves as being in a position to put whites in their place'. The report also mentioned a massive illegal liquor trade, R4,000 outstanding rents and an ever increasing number of illegal residents.[41]

What should be stressed is that the extent of corruption in the Paarl administration was not merely the result of the individual weaknesses of the personalities involved. Nor was it going to be remedied necessarily by their substitution with the 'dedicated, kindly and human officials' from the Department of Bantu Administration and Development as recommended by Snyman.[42] The point was that the prevalence of corruption in Paarl's municipal administrators was, if not inevitable, at least

made very likely by certain structural conditions. First, the municipal control over influx and endorsement out procedures made its officials extremely powerful with regard to the employers who depended on them for the supply of most of their unskilled labour. Consequently, industrial and agricultural interests would be unlikely to use their influence in the town council to act against any abuses by these men.[43] Secondly, the seasonal nature of much of the employment greatly added to the power of officialdom to regulate people's lives and so considerably increased the opportunity for official venality. Thirdly, the political environment, which gave tacit approval to the harassment and disruption of the lives of Western Cape blacks, created an ideological climate for the illicit actions of location authorities such as Paarl's (especially when they were appointed by a staunchly Nationalist town council).

Small as it was, the African population in Paarl had a fairly complex social structure. At the apex of the community were the people who, by virtue of the nature of their employment or because of the length of residence in the area, enjoyed a degree of status and security. The group included black employees of the municipal administration, artisans and skilled workers. From this group were drawn members of the advisory board. Some of them inhabited the family accommodation in Mbekweni. Two members of this group gave evidence to the Commission. Mr. Kleinbooi Sokweba, aged fifty-four, a father of twelve children, and a resident of Paarl since 1938, had taken part in 1960 in a delegation to the authorities to complain about the noisy behaviour of the inhabitants of the Mbekweni hostels.[44] Mr. Wilson Sonyani, a carpenter and lay preacher, who

lived with his family in Mbekweni, was a member of an Advisory Board delegation which had tried to warn the authorities of the spread of Poqo's influence in mid-1962. Sonyani was also the Chairman of Mbekweni School Board.[45]

Then there was the residual group of former squatters living in Langabuya with families, numbering altogether about 1,200 people. Other family groups were scattered in various squatter camps still awaiting demolition. The fortunes of these people would have varied very widely according to their legal status: but all were subject to the fear that they would no longer be permitted to live together as families in Paarl.

Thirdly, there were the migrant labourers, some of whom, as we have noted, were former squatters and who had managed to find illegal accommodation for their wives in the emergency camp. Among the migrant workers there were also more recent arrivals to Paarl, drawn there by the expansion of employment in the new manufacturing industrial sector which had developed in the 1950s. Judging by the evidence submitted to the Snyman Commission by the Food and Canning Workers as well as the contents of the union's reports[46] it seems sensible to conclude from the Union's evident concern over living conditions in both the squatter's camps and the single men's hostels, that its members, and hence workers in the 'traditional' industrial sector were to be found among both the migrant and the 'settled' sections of the African population. Therefore employment patterns in Paarl did not coincide with residential divisions and the commission evidence suggests that strong social links existed between the hostel inhabitants and Langabuya. However there was considerable tension between the migrant workers and

elite group described above.

Finally, there was a transient population of particularly vulnerable people: those who had recently arrived to seek work without any official sanction.

As we have seen black response to deteriorating conditions had on occasions been expressed in the form of prolonged and violent riots. But Africans had also defended their interests through a variety of formal organisations. The oldest of these in Paarl was the African National Congress, a branch of which was formed in December 1927. In the Boland during the late 1920s and early 1930s the ANC had been untypically energetic and had begun to resemble a mass movement. Garveyism and the expulsion of Cape Town based Communist Party of South Africa activists from the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union contributed radical impulses to the local ANC organisation. The Boland agricultural labour force was highly proletarianised, probably more than elsewhere in the country, much of it seasonal and living not on the farms but in apalling conditions of overcrowding in the urban centres. In Paarl in December 1927 a man was killed in an altercation between a police officer and the inhabitants of one of the locations. Cape Town ANC (Western Province) activists organised a series of protest meetings in Paarl, encouraging Africans and Coloured people to join the ANC and advocating communal organisation and a general strike. This was the start of a wave of rural and small town disaffection in the Boland led by the ANC whose influence soon permeated many of the farms as a result of the attendance of farmworkers at Sunday meetings arranged by the ANC in the locations. The

popular enthusiasm for the movement was a reflection of the decline in labour conditions which resulted from the 1929 to 1933 world depression. The fall in world prices especially affected Boland agriculture, which to a greater extent than elsewhere was tied to the export market. The ANC was eventually crushed in the region but not before establishing a dense network of branches: in Worcester membership exceeded 800. The Boland ANC was a thoroughly proletarian organisation in terms of its composition and preoccupations. Its membership was drawn from Coloured as well as African workers and included a large number of women.[47]

Apparently dormant in the late 1930s and 1940s as a result of the earlier persecution by farmers and local state agencies of local level leadership the ANC in Paarl was to pick up support during the early 1950s as a result of popular anger at and resistance to squatter removals. The fact that people actually destroyed their passes in 1960 suggests that they were acting in accordance with Luthuli's call for people to burn their passes, rather than the Pan Africanist Congress's directive which told men to leave their documents at home and surrender themselves at police stations without them.[48]

Contributing to the strength of the ANC's local following was the Food and Canning Workers' Union (FCWU), a force in community politics in its own right. The FCWU, founded in 1941 with an African and Coloured membership, was generated by very similar social tensions to those which produced the ANC (Western Province) a decade earlier. As in the case of the latter its membership included a large number of women and embraced both Coloureds and Africans: the African Food and Canning Workers

Union was formed in response to the requirements for registration under the Industrial Conciliation Act in 1947. Paarl had been an important centre for the Union since the establishment of a branch in 1941. The FCWU and the AFCWU during the 1950s were generally effective in protecting the promoting the economic interests of their members. For example, in Paarl in 1957, an increase was conceded by the major canning employer after a brief strike organised by the union.[49] But the two unions did not merely confine themselves to economic objectives. Both organisations were affiliated to the South African Congress of Trade Unions, a member of the Congress Alliance. In conformity with other SACTU affiliates, the canning workers unions linked the struggle for immediate economic benefits with long term political goals. Their leading officials often held important posts in other Congress Alliance organisations. Elizabeth Mefeking, for example, as well as being President of the AFCWU was also Vice-President of the ANC Women's League and in that capacity had been important in the organisation of local efforts to resist the issue of women's passes. The benefits of such an overlap could be reciprocal: though the nationalist movement could draw on union organisation to advance political strategies, at the same time individual unions could find their bargaining power considerably increased by political alliances. For example in 1959 the ANC was attempting to organise an international trade boycott. The fruit industry, especially dependent on overseas markets was understandably fairly nervous. The FCWU and the ANC were able to extract from the Langeberg co-operative (an important Boland agricultural and fruit

processing employer) an agreement which included recognition of the AFCWU and a promise not to assist the government to enforce the Urban Areas Act. In return, the Langeberg Co-operative would be left off the boycott list.[50] The Paarl branch was the major source of income for the union's headquarters. The AFCWU branch had about four hundred members, 200 of whom lived in the Mbekweni hostels.[51] With its willingness to take up issues not directly related to the workplace (living conditions, rents, provision by the municipality of certain services, etc.), the local branch of the union was an important political force in the community.

Considerably less influential and effective was the Bantu Advisory Board, appointed by the municipality's Bantu Affairs Committee on the advice of the Director, le Roux. Its members were drawn from the most privileged members of the black population. Not surprisingly the board members had accomplished little in the way of improvements or even in reflecting community grievances. As one black witness testified to the commission: 'We no longer go to the Bantu Advisory Council because it is they who push us around'.[52]

Having sketched in the social, economic and political environment that Paarl's black population lived in during the early 1960s we can now turn to the development of the Pogo movement there.

We know from police trial testimony of the existence of a PAC branch in Paarl before the organisation's proscription.[53] Unfortunately that source tells us nothing about its members or activities. The earliest record of revived activity by PAC members in Paarl is documentation from a trial of three men

convicted for recruiting on behalf of an illegal organisation. All three were originally from Cofimvaba in the Transkei, in their twenties, and lived in migrant workers' hostels. Two worked in the Bakke plastics factory and one at Rembrandt Tobacco. Their recruiting activities, which took place between February and October 1961, were concentrated in the Mbekweni and New Town locations.[54] Recruiting was a simple procedure: men would be approached, told of Poqo, 'an organisation which stood alone' and asked to pay an initial subscription of twenty five cents.[55] State witnesses at Poqo trials tended to emphasise a coercive aspect to recruiting: they would claim that they were given little option but to join, for if they did not, they were told, they would be killed or at the very least, would have to leave the location.

However, such people would naturally be anxious to disassociate themselves from the organisation. One Poqo member (who did not seem to be aware of the legal implications of turning state evidence) said he joined because:

> 'I saw that a lot of people were supporting the Poqo organisation at Mbekweni location. That's why I joined because a lot of people I know also joined.' 56

Social pressure there may have been, but this does not amount to coercion.

New members were told that the subscriptions (as well as the twenty five cents, members paid an additional ten cents a month)[57] would be used in Langa by leaders 'to buy guns' or for burials and the dependents of the dead and arrested.[58] Each new member was organised into a cell of ten people,[59] the members of which would sometimes live in the same rooms.[60]

Once a week the members of the cell would meet in their cell leader's room.[61] Less frequently there would be much larger meetings involving members of several Mbekweni cells.[62] According to age, the Poqo members would also be placed either in a 'Task Force' (if they were under twenty five) or a 'general force'.[63] The younger group would be in the vanguard of any attack as well as performing any defensive operations. Members of both forces would attend parades together in a plantation near the location. Sometimes outsiders, believed to be from Langa, would join the proceedings. Here the recruits would drill like soldiers in preparation for the great day when they would fight for the return of their land.[64]

Other preparation included the fashioning of crude weapons and, for those who could afford it, the scarification of their foreheads as a measure believed to ensure their invulnerability against the police. This was carried out by one of the main leaders and he would be paid ten rands for the operation.[65]

There are no firm indications as to how many people belonged to Poqo in Mbekweni or Paarl as a whole. At the final meeting before the attack, and in the march on the town, witnesses suggest that there were about three hundred participants. This was the figure the authorities believed at the time to have represented the local strength of Poqo. From the backgrounds of some of the defendants and state witnesses in one of the trials that took place after the uprising the following generalisations can be made. These were fairly young men who had come to work and live in Paarl since the mid-1950s. They were mainly employed in the new manufacturing industries,

in services or at the cigarette factory. They lived in one or other of the migrant workers' blocks at Mbekweni (with no noticeable concentration in any one block). Despite testimony from witnesses to the Snyman Commission that the leaders were 'educated men'[66] this feature does not emerge from the records of the trial.[67] From these rather sparse details a few tentative points can be made. Poqo's local leaders were drawn from the men who formed the most recently arrived section of Paarl's population. The absence of any employees from the traditional industrial activities in Paarl is interesting; it would suggest that the AFCWU had succeeded in influencing the political loyalties and the ideological outlook of its membership. It seems sensible to conclude that Poqo's local following was drawn more or less exclusively from the migrant labourers employed in the recently established industries rather than from the people whose livelihood depended on agriculture and good processing - these tended to more long established residents of Paarl forming a community over which the ANC and the FCWU has exerted a powerful influence for several decades. Though the Poqo men in the trial would not have had experienced all the hardships described in preceding sections of this paper (the removals from the squatters' camps and the fluctuations of employment arising out of involvement in a seasonal industry) they did come from the group which felt the severity of the system most intensely. They were unable to have their wives and children living nearby save illegally, they themselves were the most stringently subjected to influx control restrictions, and they had the most intimate knowledge of deteriorating

conditions in the reserves. It is also reasonable to assume that the general insecurity of the community and the violent tradition of social protest in Paarl would have contributed to their motivation.

Before the uprising there had been at least eight instances of violence in Paarl which were eventually attributed to Poqo. On the night of 21st January, 1962, eleven men took part in the murder of an employee of the municipal administration, Klaus Hosea. Hosea was believed by local Poqo leaders to have been an informer. He was seen writing down the numbers of lorries which had transported Poqo members from Paarl to a meeting in Simonstown. Four of the men functioned as look-outs and seven took part in the killing of Hosea. The murder took place between Mbekweni and Langabuya.[68] Nearly three months later on April 14th, the police were told of a plan to burn down the houses of municipal employees and kill the inhabitants. Early on the morning of the 15th, a strong police patrol was sent to Mbekweni. In the middle of the location they came across a crowd of about 120 men who were singing. On being intercepted the men attacked the police wounding three constables and their commanding officer. According to reports at the time, guns as well as sticks and stones were used in the attack.[69] The police were to react by raiding the location in strength on the night of May 6th. The raid involved 162 constables led by eight officers. By now the police were aware of the extent of Poqo's influence, but in spite of arresting a few suspects were able to do little to check the movement: they were unable to persuade anyone to come forward to incriminate those they had arrested.[70] From this time police raids became increasingly frequent in Mbekweni.

Two more suspected informers were to be killed by Poqo in the following months and in both cases their ending was terribly brutal. Then in the middle of June Poqo members dragged four women out of various rooms in the hostels and took them to the nearby plantation. Three of the women were hacked to death, one managed to survive her wounds and the attempt to set her body alight. The day after, a pamphlet written in Xhosa was found pasted to one of the kitchen block walls. It read:

> 'Here is something important to all of you. Girls must never be present again in our single quarters, even the individual they may be visiting will not be innocent of such charge. Never again must any preacher be heard making a noise in our single quarters by preaching. One who wishes to do so must go and do it in town.
>
> Those who are going around here with pamphlets of Watchtower it must be their last week-end, going about approaching people with this nonsense.
>
> People collecting washing for local laundries must cease to be seen collecting money in the single quarters. We will take our washing to the laundry ourselves.
>
> Christians will be allowed only this Sunday, June 24th, after which and until December 1963, never will any existing church which is calculated to oppress be allowed. There will only be one national church. All the above things will be abolished from next week until December 1963.
>
> You are being told. These are the last warnings of this nature. Therefore please tell or inform each other. The time itself tells you. It shines to each and every one, but you teach or preach falsehood to us so that the nation must remain oppressed forever.' 71

Then on September 22nd a white shopkeeper was killed in his shop in Wellington. According to police evidence he was attacked by a Poqo group from Paarl 'to show (the movement's) determination to kill whites'. The group used firearms and

emptied the cash drawer.[72] Finally on October 28th a witness, who was helping the police in their investigation of the storekeeper murder, was killed in a similarly brutal fashion to previous victims.

By the end of October, the police had arrested twenty five men whom they believed to have been involved both in the murders and in Pogo.[73] Concern over the apparent extent of the movements power had also affected the Bantu Advisory Board and the location's administrators.[74] There was a history of antipathy between the members of the Advisory Board and the inhabitants of the single hostels. Several of them owed their position on the Board to the influence of le Roux's headman, Wilson Ngcukana. Board members had acquiesced in the system of pass selling and supported measures taken against people who were behind in their rent payments.[75] In 1960, the Advisory Board had sent a deputation to the Mayor of Paarl to complain about the single men's behaviour.[76] This was during the period of le Roux's suspension, when control of the location was for a period loosened. At the weekends large numbers of women and children came into the hostels and lively parties were held. The Board members asked for the appointment of block supervisors, and more recently requested the erection of a fence to prevent unauthorised entry to the location. In May, 1962, a deputation, composed of 'leading members of the Bantu Community' alarmed by the recruiting and the drilling activities going on obviously quite openly in the location, complained to the police district commandant of 'unlawful meetings' and 'unlawful visitors'. The commandant took up

their complaints with the location administration. The administration's officials seemed to have been rather piqued that the deputation did not channel their complaints through them and Ngcukana went so far as to compromise deputation members by publicly warning them that Pogo was looking for the people who had betrayed them to the police.[77] At the beginning of November, the Board asked the administration for permission to send a second deputation to the police, but despite the urgency of the request, no more was heard of the matter.[78] Obviously the municipal officials were anxious to maintain their power within the location and did not want to rely on external assistance.

However, by this time, the municipal authorities were ready to act. Ngcukana had for some months been engaged in a series of brutal interrogations of various suspected Pogo members. At least one of the Pogo witnesses at the Snyman Commission had been in touch with the municipal police since the middle of the year.[79] Ngcukana had also been building up his own client group in the location: there was talk of a group of Mpondo who had been brought into the location recently; other members of this group included very young and recently arrived migrant workers who had just bought their passes.[80] On Sunday 18th November, at a meeting held at Wilson Ngcukana's house during the morning, the decision was taken to isolate the Pogo members by driving them out of their hostels and forcing them to occupy rooms in Block D of the location. The removals took place straight away. Men from Block A (who apparently composed the major force of Ngcukana's following),[81]

dragged men out of their rooms, beat them up, threw their belongings out after them, and then herded them into Block D. The municipal police played a leading part in this operation and apparently used the occasion to pay off a number of old scores.[82] These removals did not occur all at once but carried on until they were completed on Tuesday.[83] The municipal police then set to work on the new inmates of D Block and by Wednesday had succeeded in discovering three men allegedly involved in the murders which had taken place during the preceding months. These men were handed over to the South African Police.[84] With this blow, the stage was set for the Paarl uprising.

At 9 o'clock on the evening of May 21st, the Poqo leaders called a meeting in D Block. By now they were thoroughly alarmed and were convinced of the need for a decisive counter attack on the authorities. The meeting was told that they should prepare for an attack on Paarl police station and the prison later that night with the immediate purpose of freeing the Poqo men arrested earlier. Another object of the attack would be to obtain weapons and ammunition for the movement. Despite Snyman's assertion that the ultimate aim was to launch an attack on the white people of Paarl that night, the evidence is rather confusing with regard to what was supposed to happen when Poqo was in control of the police station and prison. But it was stressed by the speakers, that that night was not the great night when all Poqo groups were to launch a general insurrection throughout the country.[85] However, it was planned to co-ordinate the assault with the Poqo cells at Langa whom, it was hoped, would launch a diversionary attack on the police

and prevent Cape Town from sending reinforcements to Paarl.[86] Three men immediately left Mbekweni in a taxi to contact the Langa people for this purpose. While they were away, the meeting broke up and people returned to their rooms to collect their weapons and get some sleep. The last routine police patrol occurred during this lull and the police saw nothing to arouse their suspicions that anything unusual was going on.[87]

In Langa, there seems to have been some reluctance to fall in with the plans of the Paarl group. The Langa Poqo leaders first of all suggested that the Paarl men should merely kill Ngcukana, but this suggestion was rejected by the visitors. Ngcukana slept out of the location and wasn't easily accessible, and in any case was working hand in glove with the police. By now things had reached a stage where the killing of a senior clerk would not in itself provide an adequate solution. But, said the Langa men, there were not adequate numbers of Poqo members at Paarl to launch a successful attack on the police station. Then, Damane, the leader of the Paarl deputation, said 'If we are dead, then we are dead',[88] and the force of this argument seems to have convinced the men in Langa for their visitors left them with the assurance that the Cape Town police would have plenty to occupy themselves with in Langa that night.[89] On their return, the Poqo members were marshalled for another short meeting and then at half past two, on the morning of November 22nd, the march on Paarl began.

The events of the march have been described at the beginning of this chapter and are detailed at length in the Snyman Commission Report. Just two points about them will be made here. First, the sudden transformation of the march from

a disciplined attack on the police station and gaol into a general attack on any whites in the path of the marchers requires comment. The fact that Poqo members actually went into houses in Loop Street to kill their occupants suggests that this was not merely a panic stricken defensive reaction but rather involved an extension of the objects of the attack as it was originally conceived in the minds of the participants. Poqo members had for months discussed and planned for a general uprising. An insurrectionist strategy, as suggested in the previous chapter, arose quite spontaneously in the situation of migrant labour in the Western Cape in which men were caught in a web of pressures and tensions, in which neither the present nor the future held out any source of hope. At the point when the marchers turned upon the inhabitants of Loop Street, the attack which had been primarily a defensive operation, turned into an insurrection, and followed the lines of a preconceived model.

The second point worth making here is that, in the short term, the march on Paarl very nearly succeeded in attaining its immediate objectives. If it wasn't for the observation of the marchers by a bus driver on his way to the location and the failure of the marchers from stopping him from alerting the police it is quite likely that the thirty nine policemen in the Paarl district[90] (many of whom were off duty) would not have been able to cope with the attack. It took over three quarters of an hour for reinforcements from Cape Town to arrive.[91] The Paarl uprising still represents the occasion which came closest to the apocalyptic ideal of Poqo and many other movements before them: a black insurrection carried into the heart of the white cities of South Africa.

Both government reports and more socially compassionate liberal analyses tend to view political violence in South Africa as the result of psychological trauma, hence the emphasis is on the apparent irrationality of such actions, an irrationality which can only be due to an abnormal mental and emotional crisis in the minds of the participants. Snyman in his report refers to the cultural problems of modernisation and the stresses it could create:

> The migrant Bantu do not understand the ways of the white man . . . They are steeped in the customs and habits of their tribal life. . . . What the Bantu people needed in this to them strange urban setting was a sympathetic and patient administration intent on explaining and persuading them of the need for regulations . . . The great difficulties which confront the migrant Bantu in adapting himself to an urban life escape the mind of the average white man. He does not realise that the Urban Bantu is in urgent need of sympathetic guidance in adapting himself to the circumstances of urban life. . . . South Africa's industrial development has thrown up tremendous and diverse problems for it in its inter-racial relations. The easy going and generally accepted practices of separated existences for White and Bantu as obtained under rural conditions have had to be revised and adapted to the more complicated conditions arising in urban areas . . . 92

Less sententiously the SAIRR counsel pointed to the:

> . . . housing of men in 'single quarters', cut off from the stabilising influence of family life and forced to practice an unnatural continence - which is bound to lead to mental and emotional tensions and frustrations. 93

At a simpler level, a member of the Interdenominational African Ministers' Fraternal testified to the Commission that the 'riot' was 'not political' and caused by 'the sillyness of children'.[94]

Whilst not disregarding the social distress that provided a crucial contributory cause of the uprising, in this chapter I have attempted to demonstrate the rationality of the events as far as the viewpoints of the Pogo members were concerned. Just as it can be argued that the behaviour of a rioting crowd has an implicit rationality to it, so too with the marchers. The terrible events of the night of November 21st grew out of an insurrectionary characteristic of the Pogo movement. For its members the reversal of the present social order was the only alternative to its perpetuation on increasingly intolerable terms.[95] There was nothing irrational nor unbalanced about their perception of the world around them.

Chapter Five - Notes and References

1. An example of this sort of study is Gail Gerhart's Black Power in South Africa (University of California, 1979). At a more popular level, the daily series of cartoons with captions by Alan Paton in the Johannesburg Star can also be classified in this category.

2. Report of the Commission appointed to inquire into the events on the 20th to 22nd November, 1962, at Paarl. RP 51/1963 (henceforth: Snyman Commission)

3. Snyman Commission, para. 166.

4. Ibid., paras. 168-169.

5. Submission of Counsel for SAIRR to Snyman Commission, 25-3-1963. (Copy of document in SAIRR, Johannesburg)

6. A. Mafeje, 'Soweto and its aftermath' in Review of the African Political Economy, no. 11, 1978, p. 23.

7. G. Carter, T. Karis and G. Gerhart, From Protest to Challenge, Standord, 1977, p. 669 and p. 694.

8. Data from statements by accused in State vs. Mandla and 31 others, June 1963. Albie Sachs papers, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London. AS 69/8.

9. See State vs. Ngconcolo and 19 others, September 1963. Transcript held at University of York, Centre for Southern African Studies documentation project.

10. Food and Canning Workers Union, Annual Report, September 1959, p. 8. From FCWU papers held at the University of the Witwatersrand.

11. See report on evidence submitted by Advisory Board member to Snyman Commission, Cape Argus, 25-1-1963.

12. Submission of Counsel for SAIRR to Snyman Commission, p. 28.

13. Supplement to South African Industries and Trade, May 1964, pp. 21-22.

14. Cape Times, 14-8-1962.

15. Snyman Commission, para. 136.

16. Report on evidence submitted to Snyman Commission, Rand Daily Mail, 18-2-1962.

17. Transcript of proceedings of Snyman Commission, CAMP microfilm held at University of York, Morell Library, p. 600. (henceforth: Snyman proceedings)

18. Rand Daily Mail, 15-1-1963.

19. Report on evidence submitted to Snyman Commission, Rand Daily Mail, 11-2-1963.

20. Supplement to South African Industries and Trade, May 1964.

21. Snyman Proceedings, p. 518.

22. Snyman Commission, paras. 136-138.

23. Snyman Proceedings, p. 626.

24. Snyman Proceedings, p. 649. A portrait of the location is provided in Frank Barton, 'Condemned to nowhere' in Drum, July 1963.

25. The Star, 17-1-1963.

26. Snyman Proceedings, pp. 519-520 and 558-563, and FCWU Annual Report, 1961, p. 5.

27. See Martin Legassick, 'Capital accumulation and violence' in Economy and Society, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1964.

28. Barton, op. cit.

29. Ibid.

30. Institute of Administrators of non-European Affairs, Records of Proceedings of 6th Annual Conference, 9-12 September, 1957, p. 160.

31. Anon, 'Inside Poqo', Drum, February 1963.

32. Snyman Proceedings, p. 584.

33. See Verwoerd's statement in 'Bantu to quit Western Province' in Cape Times, 29-8-1962 and statement by Professor Sadie in 'African removals rejected at symposium' in Cape Times, 12-10-1962.

34. 'African wives, children, told to go home' in Cape Times, 10-10-1962.

35. 'Paarl factories' mainstay is African worker' in Cape Times, 26-7-1962.

36. Snyman Proceedings, pp. 265, 276 and 464.

37. Snyman Proceedings, pp. 312-316 and 491 and 644 and Submission of Counsel for SAIRR to Snyman Commission, p. 6 and State vs. Makatezi and 20 others, March 1963, transcript held at SAIRR (1/63), p. 90.

38. Snyman Proceedings, p. 620.

39. Ibid., p. 636.

40. Ibid., p. 316.

41. Rand Daily Mail, 19-2-1963.

42. Snyman Commission, para. 170. The self-serving behaviour of a Bantu Affairs Department-staffed bureaucracy is well illustrated in J. Kane-Berman's analysis of the West Rand Administration Board in Soweto: Black Revolt, White Reaction, Johannesburg, 1978, p. 66.

43. Evidence of employers' willingness to cooperate with municipal Bantu Administration officials is the extraordinary arrangement that existed in many factories in which rent arrears were collected through pay deductions.

44. Report on evidence submitted to Snyman Commission, Rand Daily Mail, 25-1-1963.

45. Report on evidence submitted to Snyman Commission, Rand Daily Mail, 17-1-1963.

46. See for example: Snyman Proceedings, p. 528 (letter written from FCWU to Paarl Town Clerk, 28-9-1962 re conditions in Mbekweni). Minutes of 2nd Quarterly delegates conference of AFCWU, 6-7-1952 (re demolition of workers' homes in squatters' camps) and Minutes of AFCWU 10th annual conference, 14-9-1957, p. 2 (re rents in Langabuya and Mbekweni), FCWU papers, University of the Witwatersrand.

47. E. Roux, Time longer than Rope, University of Wisconsin, 1964, p. 233; Willie Hofmeyr, 'Rural Popular Organisation and its Problems: Struggles in the Western Cape, 1929-1930', Africa Perspective, no. 22, 1983, pp. 26-49; Anon., 'Rural Struggle in the Western Cape', Social Review (Cape Town), Issue 18, May/June 1982, pp. 18-24.

48. T. Lodge, 'The Cape Town Troubles' in Journal of Southern African Studies, Vol. 4, no. 2, April, 1978.

49. M. Stein, 'The Food and Canning Workers Union', unpublished seminar paper, University of York, Centre for Southern African Studies, March 1979, p. 3.

50. 'SA UK canned fruit trade in danger' in Contact (Cape Town), Vol. 2, no. 20, 3-10-1959, p. 5, and FCWU Annual Report, September 1959, p. 9.

51. Snyman Proceedings, p. 513.

52. Lodge, op. cit., pp. 221-223.

53. State vs. Matikila and 3 others, defence lawyer's notebook, notes on evidence of Lieut. S. Sauerman, AS 35/5.

54. State vs. Matikila and 3 others, AS 35/5.

55. Snyman Proceedings, p. 251.

56. State vs. Makatezi and 20 others, SAIRR 1/63, p. 110. Snyman was told by one Poqo witness that many people joined the movement willingly. See Snyman Proceedings, p. 348.

57. Ibid., p. 251.

58. Snyman Proceedings, p. 253, Star, 23-3-1963, and Rand Daily Mail, 23-3-1963.

59. Snyman Proceedings, p. 350.

60. Ibid., p. 92.

61. Ibid., pp. 251 and 344.

62. State vs. Makatezi and 20 others, SAIRR 1/63, pp. 77-79.

63. Ibid., p. 344.

64. Snyman Proceedings, p. 255.

65. State vs. Makatezi and 20 others, SAIRR 1/63, p. 54, and Snyman Proceedings, p. 247.

66. 'Marked man tells of Poqo initiations' in Cape Times, 8-2-1963.

67. State vs. Makatezi and 20 others, SAIRR 1/63.

68. Drum, February 1963, Snyman Proceedings, pp. 237 and 335, and Cape Argus, 22-2-1968.

69. Snyman Proceedings, p. 258, Cape Times, 16-4-1962, and Rand Daily Mail, 13-3-1963.

70. Snyman Proceedings, p. 245, and Rand Daily Mail, 13-3-1963.

71. 'Court told of 13 grievances at Paarl' in Rand Daily Mail, 24-1-1963.

72. Snyman Proceedings, p. 242.

73. Ibid., pp. 244-245.

74. Rand Daily Mail, 28-1-1963.

75. Ibid.

76. Rand Daily Mail, 25-1-1963.

77. Snyman Commission, paras. 213-217.

78. Cape Argus, 19-2-1963.

79. Snyman Proceedings, p. 342.

80. Ibid., pp. 644-645.

81. Ibid., p. 321.

82. Ibid., p. 227.

83. State vs. Makatezi and 20 others, SAIRR 1/63, p. 131.

84. Snyman Commission, para. 264.

85. State vs. Makatezi and 20 others, SAIRR 1/63, p. 88.
Snyman Proceedings, p. 253.

86. State vs. Makatezi and 20 others, SAIRR 1/63, p. 147.

87. Snyman Commission, para. 276.

88. State vs. Makatezi and 20 others, SAIRR 1/63, p. 147.

89. Ibid. They were to be disappointed. In Langa there was to be no uprising that night.

90. Snyman Commission, para. 316.

91. Ibid., para. 311.

92. Ibid., paras. 161-165.

93. Submission of Counsel for SAIRR to Snyman Commission, p. 5.

94. Snyman Proceedings, p. 380.

95. In this context the socially disruptive effects of land rehabilitation measures in the Transkei (especially fierce in Emigrant Tembuland where many of these men came from) were significant.

CHAPTER SIX

PAN-AFRICANISTS IN EAST LONDON AND PRETORIA

This study has examined the development of the Pan-Africanists and their movement in the areas of their greatest popular impact: in Vereeniging, in the Western Cape and in the Tembu districts of the Transkei. In this chapter we turn to the remaining centres of significant PAC and Poqo activity - East London and Pretoria. In these places the movement did not achieve the communal resonance which it acquired in its other areas of influence, it was weaker and more narrowly socially-based, but nevertheless both in East London and Pretoria the Pan-Africanists were active quite extensively over a number of years, their history reflecting and reinforcing local political traditions. As with previous chapters discussion of the local social and political background will help to explain the PAC's emergence and development in these centres.

In stark outline the PAC's activities in East London might not seem to indicate an organisation which had succeeded in 'penetrating the soul of the multitude'.[1] In the days which followed the opening of the anti-pass campaign on March 21st on at least four occasions PAC supporters held public meetings in the main location of Duncan Village and urged people not to carry passes. On March 28th a small procession of a dozen or so men presented themselves without their books for arrest at the police station. PAC leaflets were reported to be in circulation on several occasions. A man was convicted

for shouting before others 'Africa belongs to the Africans'. Between March 21st and the end of April there were five attempts to burn down churches, three telephone booths were damaged and seven buses were stoned. These events were reported in a series of trials in the District Commissioner's Courts in May when three groups totalling twenty-six men and women were given one year prison sentences for incitement. Their identity was not reported in the press and this anonymity was reinforced by the status of the court: the cases were brief and not defended.[2] Neither these acts nor local ANC or PAC calls for a stay-at-home on March 28th and in mid-April[3] excited any externally discernable communal response, though in the case of the PAC strike call popular reaction to it may have been inhibited by five raids on the township by the police and army with saracen armoured cars and in one instance a light aeroplane. The 1,433 people[4] arrested in these raids were described as 'mostly young natives with no passes - tsotsis' and the raids were expressly conducted with the motive of removing the politically volatile.[5]

The apparent political quiescence which succeeded these events was broken only in the latter half of 1962 when between July and December five people were the victim of assassination attempts. These were the work of a group of African National Congress adherents and will be discussed later. Simultaneously from September 1962 onwards (if not before) groups of young men began to attend Poqo meetings held regularly on Tuesday and Thursday nights.[6] On the night of April 8th 1963, a large group of men assembled on open ground outside Duncan Village

bringing with them home-made weapons. Their plans to mount a local insurrection were thwarted by the police who had been warned of their intention. Over a hundred men were subsequently arrested. Thereafter PAC/Poqo activity in East London subsided though a small nucleus continued to recruit people for guerilla training in Lesotho.[7]

The significance of these events can best be understood when they are viewed in the context of the history of political organisations in East London's African community. This in turn needs to be examined against a background of an unusual degree of communal impoverishment and social insecurity.

East London, a port city, had undergone considerable industrial expansion during the war, much of this involving African labour to replace whites recruited in the war effort. Unlike many industrial centres African labour was not accommodated in municipal compounds or hostels and equally untypically the African population displayed an even ratio between the sexes and most of its members spoke the same language, Xhosa. Whilst the city fathers were anxious to limit this population's expansion through various forms of influx control instituted from the 1930s, that was where they felt their responsibilities ended. The majority of workers in East London attempted to maintain their homes in the countryside, returning every weekend to the surrounding Ciskeian reserves to visit their families. The municipal authorities constructed no housing at all between 1926 and 1940, and when money became available after the city's proclamation under the Urban Areas Act, progress on the first

sub-economic scheme of Duncan village was so slow that in the main location four fifths of the population lived in privately constructed wood and iron shacks.

Despite the balance between the sexes, East London's African population was largely one which oscillated between working in the town and visiting their families over weekends. Eighty-six per cent of the population was rural-born,[8] and surveys made in the early 1950s indicated that the majority of men between the ages of 30 and 50 spent several years of their adult lives as peasants before coming to East London.[9] Philip Mayer found in 1955 that just under half the male working population could be categorised as 'Red'; that is, having a preference for traditional clothing and ancestor beliefs as opposed to Christianity. In East London, then, a large proportion of the population was strongly influenced by an indigenous rural culture and more still maintained family links with the countryside. Christianity and schooling, not surprisingly, had a marked effect on political and social aspirations. Mayer's survey found a detached attitude to white South African culture prevalent among 'Red' workers: 'I like nothing about the white man being quite satisfied with what I am myself'. Among 'school' people the assertion of a common cultural identity with whites, combined with resentment at white social exclusiveness, was far more common.[10]

It was a population afflicted by dreadful poverty. The 40,000 inhabitants of the location on the east bank of the Rooikrans River lived mainly in corrugated iron tenement buildings, honeycombs of crudely constructed rooms, usually

opening on a yard which itself could be dotted with low kennel-like structures, used as kitchens by day and as sleeping quarters by night for poorer families. Even these families were lucky in comparison with the alcoholic bush community, some hundreds of men and women who led a terrible existence, shivering under sacks each night in the surrounding scrubland. The location itself had an ugly social complexity arising out of differential access to property. At its social apex there was a small group of owners, many of them based in the countryside, and supported by rents paid by lodgers; sometimes the high rents they charged forced the lodgers to share his or her room with sub-tenants. Within each room this structure would be reflected in sleeping arrangements; the official lodger perhaps having a bed by the window, his first sub-tenant, probably an age-mate, making do with a blanket on the floor next to the bed, and the last and least privileged sub-tenant sleeping in the least comfortable corner. For such accommodation people paid on average nearly a pound a month - approximately ten per cent of their wages.[11]

There were indications that conditions were deteriorating sharply in the late 1940s. East London's population would have been sensitive to rural conditions to an extent paralleled only by Durban. Between 1945 and 1951 the Ciskei, East London's rural hinterland, was hit by a terrible series of droughts, destroying crops and pasture and killing large numbers of cattle - for many people their only source of economic security.[12] In 1949, for example, a quarter of the existing population was lost; four years earlier it had been double the size. For

people living in the countryside, when the nearest water could involve a seven-mile walk, when they had lost their animals and crops, if they were not already among the growing number who had lost all access to land - even the misery of East London's locations offered a ray of hope. D. H. Reader, writing in the early 1950s, reported that 'relative to the size of the city, the Bantu offer themselves for work, probably in larger proportions than in any comparable centre in the Union'.[13] Resultant low wages, unemployment, the increasing poverty of rural dependents - all intensified the horror of location life. In 1945 six out of every ten African babies born in East London died in their first year; the comparable figure for whites was less than one in a hundred.[14] In 1953 there were still only thirty communal lavatories serving a population of some 40,000.[15] According to the official census an extra 10,000 people had been squeezed into the location between 1946 and 1951. But it seems that the 1951 census was apparently particularly inaccurate in the case of East London; an independent survey in 1955 concluded that the location housed over 55,000, 141 people to each acre.[16]

In the oldest section of the village, Juliwe, in 1963 an average of seventeen people were sharing each shack and sixty each latrine[17] whilst infant mortality, though lower than in 1946, was over thirty per cent (mainly due to malnutrition).[18] In the same year administrators claimed that there was a sharp increase in the numbers of illegal residents who had recently moved into the village. This was attributed to two causes: the Western Cape 'endorsement outs' and 'the existence of a

certain element encouraging people in the Transkei to converge on the location in large numbers with the hope that the large influx would hamper administration'.[19] The mass police raids conducted on the location after the pass campaign were novel only in terms of their exceptionally large scale: for years East London's African population had been subjected to the harassment of irregularly administered (and hence unpredictable), often savagely effective influx control measures.

In the absence of first-hand oral testimony one has to use one's imagination to recapture the feelings of rural people, forced out of the countryside by starvation and land shortage (or in the case of squatters and labour tenants, by white farmers), confronted with the glaring discrepancy between urban white affluence and black poverty: and bringing with them a world-view in which whites were representatives of a bitterly resented officialdom. It is not altogether surprising to find that the most vigorous political group in the location throughout the 1950s was an Africanist inspired branch of the Congress Youth League. Gerhart has argued that the intellectual evolution of Africanism was influenced by the peasant background of its original exponents. Certainly its emphasis on racial dichotomy, cultural self-sufficiency and a heroic past would have found a special resonance in the bitter antecedents of many of East London's proletarians. The East London Youth League was exceptional in the history of political groups in the town in that it brought both 'Red' and 'School' people together.[20] The Cape Youth League was unusual in that it developed first in a rural context, round Herschel (the home of

A. P. Mda, a founder of the Youth League), thereafter spreading to the coastal towns. Many of its original nucleus at Fort Hare had initially been close to the All African Convention,[21] whose leadership looked to the peasantry for their political base. Accordingly young student Youth Leaguers in the Cape had begun by organising literacy classes for farm labourers and peasants.[22]

The Youth League branch in East London was founded in 1949 and assumed an immediate importance in local communal politics. Though East London had a history of ANC and Communist Party and ICU activity at the time of the Youth League's founding neither of these bodies exerted much local influence.

The ANC itself was divided into two groups, Congress A, the longer established group and by the end of the war virtually moribund and Congress B, a branch started in 1947 by V. M. Kwinana, a secondary school teacher at Welsh High School. The rift in local Congress politics seems to have been due to personality differences rather than over questions of ideology or strategy: Kwinana was relatively conservative though willing to cooperate with Communists in the 1946 Advisory Board elections in 1946.[23] In the next few years he was to oppose the use of boycott and civil disobedience tactics.[24] The followers of Congress B were to be described by the anthropologist D. H. Reader as 'the older and more law-abiding element' of the location's inhabitants.[25]

While Communists appear to have been more active in location affairs than the ANC during the mid-forties, their

ninety African members[26] being responsible for a rejuvenation of Advisory Board politics, most of their energy seems to have been devoted to building a trade union movement in East London.[27] Notwithstanding their success in this (the Congress of Non-European Trade Unions claimed the allegiance of ten unions and 15,000 workers in East London in 1945)[28] they failed to produce out of it a working class oriented political movement. Advisory Board politicking tended to involve the better off and all the trade union work was done outside the location. The party's local leadership was multiracial and strictly enforced curfew laws made it difficult for many of them to enter the location.[29] In the decade which followed East London was to lack that organic relationship between political organisation and trade union which was to distinguish the main centres of Congress strength.[30] In East London Communists also faced competition for workers' affiliation: a local rump of the ICU presided over by an aging Clement Kadalie had organised textile, railway and harbour workers - in 1947 textile workers came out on a wildcat strike to reinstate an ICU shop steward.[31] The ICU was scarcely militant: its leaders lived on past glories (which were remembered annually on Kadalie's birthday at beachside picnics) and otherwise concentrated on improving location amenities. One of Kadalie's final acts before his death was to start a subscription fund to build a community hall.

The small cluster of high school graduates, many of them teachers, who decided in 1949 to found a branch of the Youth League in East London were immediately to provide a more

vigorous political voice than had been heard in Duncan Village for a long time. Three men formed a leadership triumvirite: C. J. Fazzie, A. S. Gwentshe and J. Lengisi. By 1949 these three men were in their mid to late twenties. Fazzie was working as a teacher and had been a member of the ANC since 1947 when he had joined Congress B at the behest of his school's vice-principle, Kwinana.[32] There is less information available on the background of the other two: Gwentshe was shortly to open a shop while Lengisi some years later would work as an attorney's clerk.[33] According to Fazzie the decision to found a branch of the League in East London was inspired by developments at Fort Hare; the East Londoners were stimulated by contacts they had with such students as T. T. Letlaka, Ntsu Mokhehle and Robert Sobukwe.[34] As a result of such influences the three became 'Diehard African Nationalists'.[35] They set about their new role with enthusiasm, collecting food and blankets for a nurses strike at Victoria East hospital[36] (Fazzie later married one of the nurses involved), advocating the boycott of Advisory Board elections (to the annoyance of Fazzie's original mentor, Kwinana)[37] and in June 1950 organising and leading a successful stay-away strike in concert with the ANC elsewhere. The June 26th stay-away confirmed the local Youth League's ascendency for it was acrimoniously opposed by the older men in Congress A and B.[38]

Political ascendency did not modify Youth Leaguer doctrine: in 1952 Fazzie was to write a sharp letter of reproof to the Bantu World which had employed the phrase 'Mandela/Mda' axis to describe the dominant ideological influence on the ANC's

national leadership. This was, Fazzie wrote, a slur on Mda 'who had worked for years for the cause of African Nationalism'.[39] This was at the point at which the ANC in alliance with the Indian Congresses was to embark upon the Defiance Campaign, a point at which orthodox Africanists were to discern a deviation from 'clear out' African Nationalism. But whatever reservations they may have had about the ideological complexion of national ANC leadership the East London Youth League were enthusiastic and effective advocates of defiance: under their leadership nearly 1,500 local volunteers were arrested between June and November 1952 making East London after Port Elizabeth the second most important centre of the civil disobedience campaign in the country.[40] Fuelling the campaign in East London was the acute social distress which had sharpened during the 1940s as a result of the location's overcrowding as well as Youth League rhetoric which was especially well suited to the emotional needs of East London's African population, a population which, like the Youth Leaguers themselves, was of predominantly a rural origin. In other centres the Youth League remained an intellectual coterie, here for a while it acquired a popular following and this, together with the proximity of the Fort Hare-based intellectuals helps to explain its adherence to Africanist dogma.

During the Campaign the East London Leaguers who had been joined by T. T. Letlaka, a teacher from Fort Hare, set up the splendidly named Bureau of African Nationalism. The Bureau was based at East London for there the local Youth Leaguers had access to a roneo machine but its members were drawn from a wider group who were to include A. P. Mda, next

to Lembede one of the most important early exponents of Africanism[41] and throughout the 1950s a high school teacher in Herschel and Ellioth Mfaxa an interpreter from near King Williams Town and the ANC's organiser for the Border region during the mid 1950s. The Bureau was founded with high hopes. As its first newsletter proclaimed:

> The present campaign of Defiance of Unjust Laws is merely a development in detail of an aspect only of the 1949 Programme of Action. The campaign only marks the beginning of a long mass-based struggle for national emancipation . . .
>
> Tremendous strides have been made since the emergence of a new conscious African nationalism. But much more remains undone: firstly, the trmendous democratic forces which have been unleashed must be given a clearer direction and goal. The objectives of the struggle, both immediate and long range, must be more clearly defined and pin-pointed. The dynamic energies of the vast millions must be harnessed to the nation-building and liberatory tasks. Secondly, the people's understanding of African nationalism must be deepened, and its far-reaching implications clarified with greater vigour and zeal. Thirdly, the wiles and machinations of the enemies of African nationalism both inside and outside the general movement must be exposed and foiled and defeated. Fourthly, the struggle must be intensified on the basis of the 1949 Programme of Action, and on the basis of African nationalism. Fifthly, a new Africanist people's leadership must be produced, and the claims of the outlook of contemporary Renascent Africa - 'Africanism', must be established once and for all. And lastly, the African nation must be consolidated and its spiritual and material resources mobilised and harnessed to the great tasks of freeing 'Africa in our life time' on the basis of African nationalism and its higher development, AFRICANISM,
>
> REMEMBER AFRICA!
>
> Issued bu AFRICANUS
>
> for the Bureau of African Nationalism, East London.

In East London, though, the exhilaration produced by the local success of the Defiance Campaign was to lead to a crushing disappointment. On 9th November 1952 a police baton charge broke up a public meeting and in the shooting and rioting which followed eight people were killed, some as a result of police bullets. A white Dominican nun was killed and mutilated by rioters, many of whom, it was subsequently discovered, were young teenagers from the poorest part of the location.[43] In the aftermath of the riots shock at the violence and fear of reprisals caused 5,000 people to leave East London, mainly shack dwellers with homes in the Ciskei. The Defiance was brought to an abrupt halt. Notwithstanding its spontaneity the riot was immediately associated with the ANC and people were no longer willing to publicly identify themselves with the Congress cause. Lengisi, Fazzie and Gwentshe had been under arrest since September and in March were tried for incitement. All three received suspended sentences as well as being restricted by banning orders. Lengisi and Gwentshe were actually banished from the Eastern Cape and removed to a remote village in the Transvaal.

In the next few years the youth leaguers contented themselves with private discussion groups and the issue of a few more bulletins from the Bureau. These petered out in 1955. There was no alternative leadership group. Few of the former local Communist Party members were active politically after the Party's dissolution in 1950. Apparently they had never, in any case, been political activists having been mainly associated with the moribund Congress A group. The trade union

base which had been built in the 1940s melted away: the only active black trade union that remained was the (Coloured) Food and Canning Workers Union and there is no record of the existence locally of its African sister union.[46] None of the former communists attempted any initiatives in African trade union organisation, and the Africanists, teachers, interpreters, clerks, traders and messengers, were usually from a background which did not provide much insight into industrial worker organisation.[44] Instead in 1955 six Youth Leaguers stood unopposed for the Advisory Board with 287 voters (one per cent of the electorate) demonstrating their support. This action did not succeed in broadening their following; the new Board members were widely regarded as 'youngsters, elected only by youngsters' and in 1957 they withdrew in conformity with an ANC call for a national boycott of Board elections.[45] Meanwhile C. J. Fazzie, the remaining member of the original leadership triumvirite began to attend meetings in Johannesburg with the Orlando Africanists, travelling 'in disguise' because of his restriction by the authorities to East London.[47] It was Fazzie's friendship with the Orlando group which was to lead to the creation of a PAC base in East London.

Cornelius Juta Fazzie was born in Queenstown in 1924. His father, a lay preacher in the Methodist Church, was a migrant worker in Worcester in the Western Cape. He had an uncle who helped to lead the 1930 East London ICU strike. Fazzie was brought up by his mother in East London. Her family were not educated people and he only began attending school at the

age of fifteen. By the age of nineteen he entered Welsh High School which he was to attend for three years. By this stage the Second World War had awakened an interest in politics: he 'observed events very thoroughly'. He gave up his involvement in rugby football and devoted much of his spare time to ANC activity. By 1952 he was secretary of the provincial executive of the Youth League and its recognised leader in East London. He led a large group of volunteers into the city centre one cold July night in defiance of curfew regulations and was imprisoned for three months, only to be re-arrested on his release in September. Losing his teaching job in the aftermath of the campaign he worked as an untrained draughtsman in an architect's office in the employ of a Mr. Osmond, a city councillor and later mayor of East London. From 1958 he ran a general dealer's store in Duncan Village, Mr. Osmond apparently using his influence to obtain for him a site. Fazzie could not be described as an intellectual and he was dependent upon others for ideas and inspiration. By the late 1950s he was a sick man affected by tuberculosis. His enthusiasm and loyalty as well as his local prominence as an Africanist earned a place on the PAC's national executive to which he was elected at the April 1959 inaugural conference.

According to Fazzie most of the remaining membership of the local branch of the Youth League followed him into the PAC. Fazzie claims that Lengisi and Gwentshe, recently released from their banishment, joined him in leading the local branch[48] but is vague about the details of other office bearers and members though they were all, apparently, socially rather similar,

reasonably well-educated, in modest commercial or white collar occupations. They left a rump of the local ANC branch, about ten men who remained loyal to the ANC partly as a consequence of friendships with some of the Port Elizabeth Congress leaders (there were few defections in Port Elizabeth to the PAC).

Despite the success in creating a local organisational base and notwithstanding the impression of Peter Molotsi, a visiting member of the national executive, who later claimed that East London was 'far readier than any other place in the Cape for the pass campaign'[49] the PAC did not succeed in evoking much popular participation in their 'positive action'. The events have already been described at the beginning of this chapter. Perhaps memories of the 1952 bloodshed were too recent and it is also possible that the PAC men had got too used to functioning as a small conspiritorial clique and had neglected to broaden their organisation's influence through public meetings and house-to-house canvassing in the weeks leading up to the campaign. In any case their comparative youth as well as their relatively privileged social background might have undermined their credibility in the eyes of many of the location dwellers. For some the events of 1960 signalled the virtual end of their political involvement: Fazzie, for instance, came out of a one year prison sentence to find that his shop had been ransacked. Suffering now from meningitis as well as consumption, he was out of work for several months before he found a job as a time-keeper at a textile mill.[50] Though sporadically in touch with PAC leaders he felt increasingly remote from their cause. In February 1962 he visited Maseru

when he heard that some of the people he had recruited into the PAC had been involved in a lorry incident. They had gone to Maseru (in obedience to directives from the Basutoland-based leadership) against Fazzie's advice. By the end of the year he had lost his influence. From December 1962 he was placed under house arrest for five years.

Despite this unpromising beginning the Pan-Africanists in East London proved to be surprisingly resilient. Three trials in 1963 involving a total of fifty six men attested to the existence of a relatively large insurrectionary movement. The first, in February 1963, was of twenty men and boys, thirteen of whom were under the age of twenty and only one older than thirty, charged with illegal meetings. They were arrested after one of these meetings was interrupted by police on November 8th. The state's case broke down because state witnesses were found to be perjuring themselves. One of these witnesses mentioned the difficulty of recruiting: 'the people were not interested'.[51] The next trial which occurred after and resulted from the abortive uprising was better reported. It began in East London with originally fifty two men being charged with sabotage. A large crowd gathered outside the magistrate's court shouting slogans and giving clenched fist salutes. Slogans included 'Africa is ours, we will take it', as well as the more traditional ANC cry of 'Amandla!'.[52] To avoid a repetition of such a demonstration the trial was switched to Butterworth in the Transkei and the accused were broken down into two groups (charges were dropped against some of the men). The state's case included details of meetings held from October 1960. The participants in these,

as with the majority of the accused, were young unmarried men drawn mainly from the oldest and poorest part of the location, Juliwe, or from the hostels for male migrant 'bachelors' which began to be constructed in the late 1950s as a municipal response to the overcrowding of the shacks. Nearer the time of the projected uprising meetings began to become more frequent and attracted larger numbers - on April 8th between two and three hundred men assembled outside Duncan Village. The leaders were in regular communication with the Maseru headquarters and in response to instructions from John Pokela collected weapons, manufactured grenades from glass, charcoal and match heads, and organised children to fashion swords from car springs and women to hold fund raising tea parties. Women, incidentally, were not permitted to attend the main meetings for 'they could not keep secrets'.[53] As mentioned in Chapter Four the occupations of those men who were convicted (the majority of the accused) included car assembly, power plant, and timber yard workers as well as schoolboys. Many of the state-witnesses were young teenagers, though there were also indications of police infiltration of the group. Several of the principal PAC men had been identified by the police as a result of their interception of letters from Basutoland.[54] Not all state-witnesses were young conscripts: a later trial in 1967 relating to the same events had several PAC office bearers testifying against C. V. Mngaza, the proprietor of a garage in the location, suggestively called Pan-African Motors. The witnesses, who included an un-named PAC regional secretary, were discredited for they were found to have been in receipt of security police favours (including the provision of housing) from 1963. The

court gave Mngaza the benefit of the doubt and he was released.[55]

Before attempting to draw any conclusions from the facts emerging from these cases a brief outline of the local ANC-inspired movement may be helpful. The East London 'Regional Committee' of the ANC were responsible for a series of assassination attempts, either by shooting or through Molotov cocktails tossed through windows, their intended victims being Bantu Authority urban representatives, suspected police informers and state witnesses. One young girl was killed, the niece of Chief Hoyi, one of Matanzima's supporters. Two others were badly injured. This violence was undertaken at the local leadership's initiative; this was a period when the ANC abjured bloodshed and the national leadership tried to dissuade the East Londoners from any further attempts to kill people.[56]

The East London ANC followers had been re-organised in 1960. After the departure of the Africanists in 1958-1959 (the exact date of this is uncertain) a new committee was elected presided over by George Komani and Malcolmness Kondoti. It is possible that the split between ANC and PAC adherents may have along lines of neighbourhood: apparently it followed a clash between Congress followers in two sections of Duncan Village over the use of a duplicating machine (possibly the former property of the Bureau of African Nationalism), Komani and his adherents eventually carrying it off from Mekeni section to Tsolo section where they lived. This committee was detained during the State of Emergency and was finally dissolved in October 1960 at the instigation of a visitor from Port Elizabeth, Vuyusili Mini. On his instructions a new clandestine seven-man

regional committee was formed and this began the construction (after a certain amount of external prodding) of a pyramid of seven-man cells, in certain areas consisting of three layers of cells, each linked to a superior cell through one 'contact man'. Most of the lower cells were recruited from young men - some still at school, others unemployed school leavers. Many of the cells were formed at large meetings held in the grounds of Welsh High School and addressed by members of the Regional Committee. Other forms of recruitment included more private social functions where ANC songs would be openly sung to attract potential supporters. Aside from the assassination attempts the activities of these cells included leafletting (the reasons for each attack were announced in stencilled leaflets), the compilation of a map of police stations in the region, the manufacture of bombs, and fundraising from location businessmen as well as through tea-parties organised by women. The attacks were carried out by various cells, the 'youths' helped and supervised by one of the older men on the regional committee. Many of the participants were arrested in mid-1963.

From the very cryptic details contained in trial records it is possible to form an impressionistic picture of a movement which sociologically was not very different to the local PAC. Five members of the original seven man nucleus were put on trial in 1964 and the two others gave evidence against them. Five of the seven were veterans of the Defiance Campaign, the most experienced ANC member joining the organisation in 1950. Two much younger men were still at school in 1960 and joined the ANC after its banning. The dominant personality in the group,

Kondoti, was unusual in that he worked during the previous ten years as a casual labourer and domestic servant changing employers on eight occasions. Of the rest there is information about four: Bongco, effectively second in command owned and ran a photographic studio in the village, the two recent school leavers worked as clerks and typists, one for an attorney and the other at Welsh High School and Bennet Mashiyana, an older man who turned state evidence also worked as an attorney's clerk. The members of the lower cells were possibly a little better educated than the mass of local PAC followers and seem to have included fewer manual workers though the leadership in April 1961 did try to mobilise stevedores in the national stay-away strike in protest against the Republic celebrations.[57]

In East London there were formidable barriers to the political mobilisation of Africans. Poverty, job insecurity, and unemployment together with a well entrenched local tradition of authoritarian reprisals after moments of communal assertion helped to check the development of widespread involvement in radical organisations. Officially permitted channels of political participation were even less likely to evoke a popular response: this was indicated throughout the decade in the dismal voter turnout in Advisory Board elections. The decline after 1950 of trade unions meant one of the most important constituents in the organisational base of a radical black political movement was absent. Job insecurity and the population's oscillation weekly between urban and rural society probably also helped to restrict the development of proletarian class solidarity. It was consequently those who were materially and psychologically most immune to the apathy and fear arising from insecurity and

repression who were most likely to participate in movements like the ANC and the PAC. At best such people represented a minority: men in middle class occupations such as teaching or clerical work, independent businessmen, and the school children and unemployed youth whose imagination had yet to be crushed by the experience of East London proletarian life. The proximity of East London to Fort Hare helped to confirm the early ascendancy of Africanism in Congress politics; in the absence of a well-developed alternative tradition its polarised worldview retained its attraction for the young inhabitants of the Duncan Village schools and hostels. For older people the realities of everyday life limited their political imagination and sapped their self confidence. In such circumstances it is reasonable to argue that the insurrectionary vision of a socially unrepresentative minority represented wider and more popular hopes and fantasies.

In Pretoria the Pan Africanists appeared from trial evidence to have a rather more extensive degree of support than was the case in East London with reports of conspiracies in all three major townships, though once again their following was generally young with school children playing a predominant role. As with East London the genesis of the movement becomes easier to understand if it is examined with the local social and historical background in mind.

By 1960 three quarters of Pretoria's 200,000 African inhabitants lived in the freehold township of Lady Selbourne and the municipal townships of Atteridgeville and Vlakfontein.[58] The remainder still dwelt in smaller locations and squatter

encampments which the Council had been busy destroying during the previous decade. Each had a population of around 50,000 (Atteridgeville at 45,000 was the smallest of the three) and had grown rapidly during the years since the war.[59] In character the townships were each different. Lady Selbourne, the oldest was founded in 1905 as one of the two places in the environs of Pretoria where Africans could buy land. A square mile in area situated on a hill side seven miles north-west of the city centre by 1960 it was densely overcrowded with an average of over thirty people living on each one of its 1,500 stands.[60] Most of these people lived in a single room in six room houses whose back-yards would be fringed by rows of shacks providing further accommodation. The 1,000-odd Landlords were usually old, heavily indebted, and dependent on their property for a livelihood; the only people to demonstrate much evidence of material prosperity were the tiny core of professional people (ten African doctors served the three townships and ninety-two teachers worked in Lady Selbourne) and businessmen (fifty-four Africans were licenced to trade in the township).[61] Most of the other inhabitants of Lady Selbourne depended upon jobs in Pretoria's city centre, mainly in the commercial and distributive trades where about 20,000 people from Lady Selbourne were employed. Engineering firms and the Iron and Steel Corporation, as well as the Railways, provided unskilled employment for another 4,000.[62] Approximately 10,000 children attended Lady Selbourne's ten primary schools and two high schools - about fifty-five per cent of the children of eligible age in the township.[63]

In 1960 Lady Selbourne was in the last phase of its history. From 1954 a threat to 'rezone' the township as white had hung over the community and the legal machinery for its destruction existed from 1958. In early 1962 the first removals began to a new state-controlled township, Ga-Rankua, twenty miles to the west. The prospect of the community's dissolution evoked widespread anxiety for quite apart from the increased expenses of living in Ga-Rankua or the municipal townships the move appeared to young people to involve a dimunition of rights: only those people with a previous record of employment in Pretoria would be allowed to take up jobs within the municipal area.[64] A rise in communal social tensions was evident in the appearance of youthful gangsterism towards the end of the 1950s, hitherto unknown in Lady Selbourne.[65]

Atteridgeville was a more recent creation than Lady Selbourne, Pretoria's first municipal township being constructed in 1940 to house the people evicted from the inner-city Marabastad location.[66] Four basic types of house were built of varying sizes, each provided with lights, baths and running water: for its time Atteridgeville housing was of a relatively high quality. Perhaps for this reason the municipality decreed that it should be let at 'economic' (non-subsidised) rents and these were to be a perennial source of complaint amongst Atteridgeville's inhabitants. Located to the south-west of Pretoria the township was adjacent to the ISCOR iron and steel works and it is likely that in 1960 it accommodated the major proportion of its 12,000 African workers[67] who did not live in hostels. ISCOR wages averaged at £14 0 0 a month. In a survey conducted in 1954, 611 out of 1,450 families were found to be earning less than £10 0 0.[68]

Vlakfontein was the newest and largest of the townships. The first houses were built in the early 1950s but it grew rapidly as its population was swollen by the displaced inhabitants of squatter camps and older locations. Fourteen miles from the city centre it was located at the edge of its Eastern industrial district. Its population was divided between those who lived in and could afford to rent one of the 1,400 houses also available on thirty-year leasehold and those who constructed their own shelter on site and service plots.[69] Vlakfontein was planned according to the principles of Aparthied social engineering: the less privileged inhabitants of the site and service scheme were subjected to ethnic grouping. Because of its recent development, Vlakfontein lacked the strong sense of communal identity the other two possessed, its political culture was less organised, it was more tightly administered and for these reasons it will feature less frequently in this narrative than Atteridgeville and Lady Selbourne.

Pretoria's African population was unusually generously provided with secondary schools the town accommodating four of the schools offering to African pupils instruction up to matriculation, quarter of the Transvaal's total and one more than in the much more heavily populated Witwatersrand area.[70]

This was an area with rich and diverse political traditions. Up to the 1940s the African National Congress had been the dominant voice in African politics. One of the forerunners to the ANC, the Transvaal Native Congress was founded in Pretoria by S. M. Makgatho of Lady Selbourne, a former high school teacher, estate agent and newspaper proprietor.[71] From 1917 to

1924 he presided over the ANC itself, during the restless years after the First World War leading two local civil disobedience campaigns, one to obtain for Africans the provision of first class railway accommodation and the other to gain the right to use the city's pavements hitherto denied to black people.[72] Both were successful, as was a deputation led by Makgatho to persuade the authorities to drop plans to apply night pass regulations to women.[73]

In 1930 Pretoria was one of the few centres in which there was a significant response to the Communist call for pass burnings on December 16th. Here the ANC was exceptional in responding to the campaign which it opposed elsewhere. Naboth Mokgatle's account of the Pretoria pass burnings does not mention communists. The protest was instigated locally by four groups: the ANC, the ICU, the 'Radicals' and the 'Garveyites'. Those who responded to the campaign, according to Mokgatle, were mainly members of the unemployed of Marabastad whose numbers had risen sharply recently due to the depression. The depression had an especial impact on Africans in Pretoria where local white politicians urged a boycott of all services employing African labour. The pass campaign was succeeded by mass arrests and for a few years the ANC 'was no longer heard of' in Pretoria.[74] But with the threat of impending demolitions in Marabastad the ANC once again became active. Ezekiel Mphahlele remembers regular Sunday meetings organised by the ANC in the location during 1938.[75] It is possible that it spoke with a more popular voice and to a more popular constituency than before for the 'Radicals' with the death of their leader George Daniels had broken up and the ICU had lost heart when its local leader,

Isaac Moroe switched allegiances to become compound manager of African workers employed in the municipal quarry.[76] By 1942 the Pretoria ICU degenerated to the extent that it could be called 'prima facie merely an eating club'.[77]

But it was the Communists with their advocacy of African labour organisations who were to inherit the constituency left by the Radicals and the ICU men. The Communist Party established a branch in Pretoria in 1940; before then Pretoria-based members of the Johannesburg District Committee of the Party tried to create a local African following through the establishment of a short-lived nightschool. The school was closed after losing its premises in 1935. The first efforts to establish African trade unions in Pretoria were not by Communists at all: for a short period a branch of the Johannesburg-based African Commercial and Distributive Workers' Union opened an office in Marabastad and collected subscriptions. Its local founder, Naboth Mokgatle, a shop delivery worker, had been inspired by a public meeting addressed by the ACDWU's Trotskyite leader, Max Gordon. The Pretoria branch did not prosper: for shortly after its formation in 1939 Gordon was interned and the administration of its Johannesburg office to which the Pretoria subscriptions were sent ground to a halt. Mokgatle then set up his own independent Pretoria Non-European Distributive Worker Union and shortly thereafter in 1941 joined the Communist Party which had recently set up an 'area group' in Marabastad. In the year that followed Mokgatle and his comrades formed eleven more unions including organisations for municipal, railway, cement, building, dairy, iron and steel, laundry, meat and match workers.[78] These were all to be affiliated to the Pretoria Council

of Non-European Trade Unions, presided over by Mike Muller, in 1943 a twenty year old former student from Pretoria University. At its peak in 1943 the Pretoria CNETU boasted an affiliation of 17,000 workers[79] and in March Mike Muller led several thousand of these in a city centre demonstration for Trade Union recognition.

For three years the trade union movement flourished, its popularity strengthened by a series of minimum wage determinations made by the wartime Smuts government. The communists' and trade unionists' status was also enhanced by a commission of enquiry which exhonerated them of responsibility for a riot in late 1942 in the Marabastad Municipal workers' compound. In the weeks following the riot the Municipal Workers Union's membership swelled from six to nine hundred.[80] After the war, though, African labour organisation in Pretoria went into decline. By 1948 six of the unions mentioned by Mokgatle had evidently ceased to exist and CNETU claimed only 3,300 Pretoria-based workers in its affiliated membership.[81] This decline indicated a less favourable political climate as well as organisational weaknesses within the unions and the Party. In 1945 influx control was vigorously tightened in Pretoria and this, together with the end of the war-time industrial growth, increased worker vulnerability to dismissal. Mokgatle reports that in this year the emphasis of trade union work shifted from wages to contesting the powers of the new municipal labour bureau.[82] In 1946 the unions lost the office they shared when they were evicted by the landlord. Falling membership and the loss of the office reduced the flow of subscriptions and five of the six African secretaries (one for each two unions) lost

their jobs. Muller left the Party in 1947 (after quarrelling with Mokgatle because of the latter's failure to secure the reinstatement of some Central News Agency strikers) and the administration of the unions revolved around Mokgatle and Stephen Sondag Tefu, a resident of Lady Selbourne who had, before his expulsion, been a member of the Communist Party in Johannesburg. Though Mokgatle was on the District Committee (and from 1949 its chairman) his trade union work was carried on at a distance from the Party: he and Tefu hired premises independently in Marabastad and launched a 'General Workers Union'.[83]

The fact that African trade union work was entrusted to some of the least experienced and junior party members was a reflection of the troubled character of the Pretoria Communist Party. A diary kept by one of the more socially distinguished local members, the advocate George Findlay provides insight into some of the essential problems.[84] Writing in 1944, Findlay depicts a group whose white members were sharply divided between advocates of 'Browderism' (followers of the American Communist policy of conciliation towards allied governments during the war) and those who believed in a strategy of confrontation. The Browderites included Muller, whereas Findlay himself was highly critical of the policy. Ironically, though, Muller was one of the few white activists who were doing what the anti-Browderites insisted was imperative: mobilising Africans. The weight of the Party's white membership and leadership were instead concerned to combat the influence of Afrikaner Nationalism in Pretoria's white unions (where it was having an especially fierce impact[85]). Some of the tensions are

evident in the diary: commenting upon 'the poor quality of the European membership' Findlay complains of the 'unconscious spirit of evading mass contacts'[86] and also mentions one of the leading African members, Eliphas Ditsele, as 'letting rip, saying the European comrades were largely indifferent and failing all around'.[87] In 1945 in February white youths stoned the Party's local headquarters while an education and ballroom dancing ('very orderly, no mixed dancing, tap-dancing, ballroom'[88]) classes were in session. Police intervened but took the side of the insurgents and many of the hundred or so African dancers were beaten up or arrested. In the following month the landlord withdrew the premises, and there were expulsions and resignations from the Party.[89] By 1950, when preparations were being made for Pretoria workers to be called out for the national May Day stay-away to protest against the banning of Communist Party leaders, the organisation was apparently entirely in the hands of Mokgatle and Tefu.[90]

It would have taken considerable social sensitivity on both sides to bridge the gulf that existed in class and background between white and black members of the Party. The white members were generally from a professional background (in some cases quite wealthy) whereas the African communists listed for Pretoria in the Government Gazette[91] include five shopworkers, messengers, or delivery men, three labourers, two bus conductors, one clinic worker and one carpenter, as well as Ditsele who served as Pretoria agent for the Guardian. Eleven lived in Atteridgeville and four in Lady Selbourne. With the exception of Ditsele it is unlikely that the rest had an extensive formal

education and not surprisingly Findlay's diary only rarely mentions Africans as playing a significant role in the discussions which took place at party meetings. Mokgatle may not have been typical but despite his attendance at a party school in 1943 his understanding of the Party's policies seems to have been limited to its advocacy on an ideal society 'in which all children would have free education and equal opportunities . . . (and) all . . . would have the right to vote'.[92] This is not to disparage the achievement of Mokgatle and his fellow trade unionists (most of whom were also originally from the shopworker group), for their efforts to organise and mobilise a working class movement were in the face of determined opposition. Before the 1950 May Day strike, for example:

> 'On Sunday evening the police accompanied by the army, began to transport workers to their places of work to sleep there. I went to the bus terminus to see what was happening. There I found the workers being taken away from their families to sleep at work, escorted by the army and police motor cycles. When the workers passed me into the buses their heads were hanging down.' 93

Popular apathy, a strong police presence and opposition from local Youth Leaguers all contributed to the fruitlessness of Mokgatle's efforts to organise demonstrations of working class consciousness. Undaunted he continued his soap-box oratory on Market days, advising local ANC activists on how to conduct their campaigns, and in 1953 founding an ambitiously named 'Federation of African Trade Unions of South Africa' before going into exile the following year.

Political radicalism within Pretoria's black community had during the 1940s been centred around the Communist Party and had found the major part of its following in Marabastad and

in Atteridgeville to which the majority of Marabastad's inhabitants were removed. In the following decade the ANC was to fill the space left by the Communists and indeed it is possible to trace a continuity of membership between the two organisations: at least five people who had been prominent in the Communist Party or in the labour movement it created held office in the Pretoria ANC branch during the 1950s.[94] These included Mokgatle's collaborator, Stephen Tefu. Notwithstanding overlaps in membership and officeholders the local ANC had a rather different character. Its strength was in the freehold village of Lady Selbourne, where for some years it was able to maintain an office and a full-time official from money regularly donated by the village's Chinese trading community. In Lady Selbourne it had a membership of between four and five hundred whereas in other townships there were only small groups of adherents. At the beginning of the decade the ANC was well represented on the Village Committee - essentially a vehicle for the interests of property owners. However the ANC itself was not an organ of the socially privileged: the leading members of the Lady Selbourne Committee included two dairy workers, a shop worker, a carpenter and painter, and a former trade union official.[95] The ANC's strength in Lady Selbourne reflected the economic resources which the existence of a black propertied class[96] made available but the composition of its leadership was at least partly influenced by the preceding decade of proletarian oriented organisation. What the Lady Selbourne ANC appeared to lack were people from a professional or well-educated background: here the proximity of Johannesburg

worked to their disadvantage. Dr. William Nkomo, for example, a local resident, a recently qualified medical practitioner and a founder of the Youth League, did not take part in local branch activities, attending instead national executive meetings in Johannesburg until his resignation from the ANC in 1953.

It is also possible that the location of the ANC in Lady Selbourne distanced it for a time from the trade union tradition built up by the Communists during the 1940s. Only in the late 1950s were efforts made to re-create a politically-aligned trade union movement. A South African Congress of Trade Union local committee was established in 1956 but sent no delegates to the 'National Workers Conference' held by SACTU in 1957. In 1959 an attempt was made to establish a domestic and catering workers' union and in 1961 a full-time official was appointed by SACTU in Johannesburg to organise Pretoria's iron and steel workers.[97]

The history of the Lady Selbourne ANC in the 1950s was a troubled one. Regular meetings, efficient and energetic organisation and assistance from the local Indian community all contributed to the local impact of the Defiance Campaign in which ten batches of volunteers broke railway segregation of curfew regulations between August and November 1952.[98] The following year the branch committee disbanded in protest against Dr. Nkomo collecting funds from local traders for the Johannesburg office. The branch was only reconstituted in 1955 after the Congress of the People the initiative being taken by Peter Magano, a former dairy worker and Defiance Campaign volunteer who had served on the committee in 1952. Local

interest in the ANC was considerably strengthened by the Federation of South African Women's great anti-pass demonstration in Pretoria in 1956: the Lady Selbourne branch collected food from local traders and arranged accommodation for the visiting women. Thereafter women appeared to play an especially assertive role in local political activity.

At the beginning of 1957 the Lady Selbourne branch organised and led a communal boycott of buses in response to fare increases. In doing so they were part of a larger movement which affected Alexandra, north of Johannesburg, as well as Sophiatown. But though the initiative to boycott the buses came from outside the protest against fare rises seems to have touched upon a raw nerve in a desperately impoverished community.[99] Magano's memories provide an impression of a striking degree of communal mobilisation. The boycott was preceded by a house-to-house leafletting campaign, the ringing of church bells, the picketing of street corners, and the beating of telegraph poles to warn people to rise early so they could walk to work. Previously the ANC delegation had successfully taken over a Village Committee meeting which had initially opposed the concept of a boycott advocating instead legal action against the Public Utility Transport Company (PUTCO). The success of the first few days of the boycott was partly explained by the option those who could afford it had of using the nearby train service. In response to the South African Railways System's reduction in the number of railway coaches serving the adjacent station the ANC called an evening meeting on January 18th. The meeting was broken up by the Police Mobile Unit (a Pretoria-based squad formed to combat rural women's

anti-pass unrest) and many people were beaten up and one cyclist returning from work was shot dead. His funeral attracted most of the population of Lady Selbourne and in its aftermath the ANC's branch membership swelled to 3,000. The boycott spread picking up an especially militant and sometimes violent female following in the squatter communities of Mooiplas and Eastwood.[100]

The boycott's denouement, however, was to be anti-climatic. In Johannesburg a complicated arrangement involving subsidies from the Chambers of Commerce and the Municipality was worked out so that the pre-boycott fares could be retained but the negotiations did not cover Pretoria and the local Afrikaans Sakerkamer was unwilling to consider a similar settlement. From April the Pretoria boycotters were left isolated and gradually their resolve weakened as the PUTCO buses shortened their routes so as to provide a service to commuters at the old fare. For the second time the Pretoria ANC had been let down by the Johannesburg-based leadership. Not surprisingly there was no response in Pretoria in 1958 to the ANC call for a nation-wide three day stay-at-home.[101]

Given this background it is not surprising that splits developed in the Pretoria ANC leadership. In 1959 a leaflet was circulated by the Lady Selbourne branch calling for women to demonstrate against the pass laws. Since 1956 the Lady Selbourne branch had been regularly active in mobilising local women's anti-pass protests. The leaflet was drafted by a relatively new member of the branch committee, Dr. Peter Tsele, a prominent Africanist. The language and tone of the leaflet

prompted the Pretoria Municipality to ban the demonstration and the ANC leadership in Johannesburg counselled the branch to heed the ban. A narrow majority of the committee opposed the idea of calling off the ban and on the 26th February after leading a small delegation of women to protests against passes in front of the Native Commissioners' Office Tsele presided over a large meeting. The meeting was brutally interrupted by the police, many women (including several who were pregnant) were beaten up and Tsele and his confederates were arrested.[102] Shortly thereafter Tsele announced his defection from the ANC and founded his own Africanist organisation, the Pan-African Freedom Movement.

Tsele's followers included men who had played a prominent role in the Lady Selbourne ANC since 1955 but it is possible that their withdrawal helped to strengthen the ANC's local organisation. Tsele himself was a wealthy doctor, his leading followers included two self employed craftsmen, whereas the new ANC branch executive headed by Peter Magano which was constituted after their resignation was drawn mainly from manual labourers.[103] In 1961 according to the ANC's own account the local clandestine ANC leadership in conjunction with the SACTU local committee managed to organise a remarkably profound response to the 1961 anti-republican stay-away. On the first day, the 28th May, fifty per cent of the workforce in Vlakfontein and Atteridgeville and eighty per cent of the Lady Selbourne workers stayed at home. This was despite three massive police raids which immediately preceded the strike ostensibly in search for pass offenders and the arrest and 'endorsement out' of several organisers (Magano had been subjected to house arrest in

March).[104] SACTU's efforts amongst steelworkers were attested to by a high level of participation in the strike amongst African ISCOR workers. Other sectors of the Pretoria African workforce which the ANC claimed to have responded particularly well were dairy workers, railway workers and domestics. There was a demonstration in support of the strike at Kilnerton High School and Indian shops in accordance with a well established communal tradition remained closed for the duration of the protest.[105]

In a slow and halting fashion the ANC in Pretoria during the 1950s was in the process of constituting itself as a movement of the poor and under-privileged. By the end of the decade it is possible to discern a social reorientation of the local movement away from a dependence upon the resources of a small but politically significant propertied class (itself in any case throughout the decade increasingly threatened with the impending destruction of the freehold township) and towards a working class political identity some of the foundations of which had been established by local Communists in the preceding decade.

The first reports of PAC activity in Lady Selbourne occurred very shortly before the pass campaign on March 11th 1960, when leaflets were distributed in Lady Selbourne advertising a street corner meeting for 2.30 p.m. the following Sunday.[106] The PAC's leaders turned up in force for the meeting, accompanied by some members of the Pan-African Freedom Movement which, according to a police observer, was in the process of 'being consumed by the PAC'.[107] From Johannesburg came Robert Sobukwe, Josias Madzunya, Jacob Nyaose, Z. B. Molete and Potlake Leballo. Z. B. Molete told the assembled gathering that:

'. . . when a white man set his foot in Africa he started land-grabbing, robbery and raping our country. The fight of Tchaka and Dingaan is now and we are starting today. Because Tchaka and Dingaan fought on tribal lines their struggle failed and they were defeated . . . Whites are people that should be carrying passes.' 108

Amongst the local PAC men and their allies who were on the platform were Elias Ntloedibe, Stephen Tefu, Solomon Sello, S. S. M. Maimela and Isaac Kopanye. We know a little about each of them. Ntloedibe, the chairman of the Pretoria PAC man was a comparatively young man, aged thirty one. Until recently, though a resident of Lady Selbourne, he worked as a court interpreter in Johannesburg and had had a local reputation as a writer of novels and articles in Afrikaans.[109] The previous year he had made a stormy impact at the first African Writers' Conference which was held in Atteridgeville (attended also by Sobukwe) where he had called upon his fellow writers 'to throw away their blinkers'.[110] Stephen Tefu has already appeared in this narrative as Mokgatle's partner in trade union organisation during the 1940s. In 1960 he was fifty with thirty years of political experience going back to his recruitment by the Communist Party in the early 1930s. For a time he was a member of the Party's Central Committee.[111] Magano remembers him from the 1950s as 'diehard' Congressman in the mid 1950s and the circumstances of his joining the PAC are a mystery. Sello, the PAC branch treasurer, had been present at the boycotters' meeting on January 28th 1957 and had been shot that day in the stomach.[112] In 1960 he was slowly dying of the after effects of the wound. It is possible that

the isolation of the Pretoria boycotters after the Johannesburg settlement turned him against the ANC. Maimela and Kopanye, former ANC committee members (Maimela had also worked with Mokgatle on trade unions[113]), were known as associates of Tsele. The Pan-Africanists in Lady Selbourne then, included some of the more dominant figures in local political activity over the previous couple of decades.

This notwithstanding, their efforts to arouse support for the pass campaign were in vain. On the March 21st Ntloedibe, Sello and four others, presented themselves at Hercules police station outside Lady Selbourne without their passes and with lapel badges inscribed 'Africa for the Africans'.[114] This was after a morning of tramping the streets and holding meetings around a green, gold and black PAC flag. The only place where they seemed to make an impression was at Lady Selbourne High School where a former student of the school held a meeting. He was ordered off the grounds by the headmaster, Mr. Bob Leshoai, who later claimed that there was a considerable amount of unrest among his charges, many of the pupils desiring to surrender themselves alongside the PAC men.[115] After leaving the school the PAC group marched through Lady Selbourne calling upon its inhabitants to throw away their passes and stay away from work. Ntloedibe was overheard by a policeman to remark that 'it would have been better if we had gone to Atteridgeville - we would have got more support there'.[116] After their arrest Ntloedibe and his five comrades were sent to prison for varying terms of six months to one year. Little was heard of the PAC for some time after this.

The local ANC men fared little better. In response to Lutuli's call Maganoand his executive burned their passes and agitated for a stay at home. Indian shops closed and taxi drivers observed a 'day of mourning' but otherwise the only departure from normality reported in the local newspaper was the emptiness of the Commissioners' Courts because of the national suspension of pass laws.[117] Afterwards, though, police attributed a certain amount of disorderlyness to local 'Tsotsis'.[118]

Perhaps, though, the events of March 1960 made a deeper communal impression than appeared on the surface. On September 9th 1960 a car carrying two white men collided with a black cyclist in Prinsloo Street in central Pretoria. The cyclist was unhurt and was roughly told to look where he was going. In response he pushed the driver in the face. The white men drove off but stopped at a nearby cafe to buy cigarettes. They were immediately surrounded by an angry crowd of two hundred. There were shouts of 'This is our land. Don't think you are in Katanga now'. Before the driver and his passenger were rescued by police they were slashed across their arms with knives.[119] And Lady Selbourne had a new local celebrity. During an end of year address at Lady Selbourne High School Bob Leshoai reminded the five hundred pupils of a recently distinguished old boy, Philip Kgosana, and requested them to stand in his honour.[120]

It does appear that the reorganisation of a clandestine PAC organisation began at the high schools. Tommy Mohajane, a former pupil at Kilnerton High School remembers PAC posters going up in the school on March 22nd 1960. He joined a group of PAC adherents numbering about fifty in mid-1961. They helped

organise a strike in June that year ostensibly in protest against being kept in class after examinations.[121] Several members of the group were thereafter expelled, one of them, Ernest Dikgang Moseneke, enrolling at Hofmeyr High School in Atteridgeville, at the beginning of 1962 where he immersed himself once again in PAC activities.[122] At the Atteridgeville school there existed a branch of the African Students Union of South Africa which had been formed shortly after Sharpeville by PAC loyalists at Turfloop University College outside Pietersburg.[123] In August the Atteridgeville ASUSA members were told that they now formally constituted a PAC cell.[124] By now leadership of the Pretoria PAC seems to have passed to a new group centred in the schools. Ntloedibe, after serving his prison sentence, had stayed in the country long enough to issue a leaflet denying that the PAC had collaborated with the police in opposing the 1961 stay-at-home and then travelled to Maseru to join the National Executive. Sello was dead; he died shortly after an operation in a prison hospital had failed to make good the harm caused by the police bullet he had received in 1957. Tefu was in prison after breaking his banning order by attending a meeting called by the Lady Selbourne Village Committee to discuss the impending removals.[125] The strength of the movement as well as much of its following had shifted from Lady Selbourne to Atteridgeville and the new township of Vlakfontein, both of which were being enlarged to accommodate the tenants displaced by the demolitions which had begun in the old freehold village.

In 1963 a series of six trials revealed extensive PAC activity in the two municipal townships, the nearby educational institutions as well as in Lady Selbourne.[126] A witness in one

of the trials, the secretary of the PAC's Northern Transvaal Region testified to the existence of three concentrations of PAC membership in his region, at Pietersburg, Nelspruit and Pretoria, together numbering over 1,000. To support his claim he recited to the court the names of over a hundred of the Pretoria members with whom he was acquainted.[127] If his claim was accurate it seems sensible to assume that the greater part of the region's membership was in Pretoria.

Beyond the actions and alleged intentions of those who were convicted in these trials there is only very sketchy information about them. There seems to have been a well-developed cellular structure in the three townships put on a systematic organised footing at the end of 1962. At this point delegates were sent to Maseru where they were instructed to recruit and make preparations for the impending uprising. In response to this the Atteridgeville cells began the highly hazardous task of collecting and caching unexploded mortar bombs from the Skurweweg Artillary Range. As with other groups elsewhere in the country PAC followers were told to buy and store mealie meal and clothing and manufacture weapons and petrol bombs. A list of suitable targets was drawn up. In Atteridgeville a group named 'The Twelve Disciples' was formed and given the task of assassinating selected security police and informers. They made two attempts upon the life of a local policeman, but on each occasion when they approached his house he had company and they lost heart.[128] Students at the Hebron Teacher Training College planned to kill their teachers and then use their cars to travel to Church Square where they would join detachments from Vlakfontein, Atteridgeville and Lady Selbourne in an attack

on the city.[129] In Vlakfontein a plan was made to hold up the regular dynamite truck which passed by the township on the way to the diamond mine.[130] Such intentions were resolved and cemented in oathing rituals conducted during night time meetings in the hills surrounding Pretoria: those who were told to cut their wrists as a symbol of their sacrifice for Africa.[131] Though some state witnesses spoke of being compelled to belong to the organisation much of the evidence seemed to indicate a strong level of commitment: before March 1963 the Vlakfontein group apparently sent a message to Leballo announcing their readiness for the uprising and their unwillingness to be kept waiting. At the same time though, Vlakfontein members were reproved by their leaders for 'recruiting far too many children'.[132]

All these plans were anticipated by the police: the organisation was well infiltrated by informers and between March 22nd and April 8th nearly seventy suspected PAC members were arrested. A large proportion of these received heavy prison sentences, five of them for life.

Apart from their names and ages - the majority were in their late teens or early twenties - little can be gleaned from the trial evidence concerning the background of these men. Many were high school pupils and in Atteridgeville at least teachers seem to have played a key role. The Atteridgeville teachers included John Nkosi, Jeff Masemula and Peter Rikhotso - the last a history teacher who in classroom was alleged to have told his pupils about the whites' theft of land and the need to fight for its restoration to Africans.[133] The only name from the past was the chairman of the Atteridgeville PAC,

Simon Brander, convicted alongside Masemula. Brander had been the Lady Selbourne ANC's full-time secretary during the Defiance Campaign and had later associated himself with Tsele during the 1959 women's protest.

Peter Magano and other ANC loyalists remained active throughout these events. In 1962 they had formed cells linked to Umkonto we Sizwe's leadership in Johannesburg and in the course of late 1962 and during 1963 were responsible for at least half a dozen sabotage attacks upon government buildings and railway lines. In conformity with Umkonto policy care was taken to avoid putting lives at risk. The group involved a relatively small number of men. Along with Magano one of the key organisers was Tseleng Mosupye who from 1959 had led a union of catering workers; waiters and other people employed in the catering industry made up a significant proportion of Umkonto's local membership. With their arrest in 1964 an era spanning nearly four decades of radical black dissent came to a close in Pretoria.[134]

This sad drama took place against a backdrop of communal tension. The removals from Lady Selbourne though not energetically contested were widely feared, especially by the young and the very old: the former because of the prospect of losing their chances of employment in the city and the latter because for many of them life in Lady Selbourne was the only life they could afford.[135] Many of the inhabitants of the municipal townships were forcefully resettled inhabitants of the ring of squatter settlements which had grown up round Pretoria during the war and had been eradicated towards the end of the 1950s. For many

life in their new homes was difficult: in August 1960 anger which had been accumulating in Atteridgeville over high rents, low wages and poor transport boiled over at the railway station when delayed passengers assaulted the drivers and ticket examiners on the late trains. Arriving buses were stoned to cries of 'Azikwelwa' from the crowd.[136] During 1960 and 1961 anticipating political unrest and to check a growing wave of youthful gangsterism the police subjected Vlakfontein and Atteridgeville to massive pass raids on occasions deploying eight hundred policemen.[137] In two days in May 1961, 1,500 men and women appeared in the Commissioners' Court on charges of illegal entry.[138] The gangsterism the police complained of was itself a relatively new symptom of social distress among the young in all three townships.[139] Even those for whom education offered the possibility of escape from poverty had fiercely curtailed chances of meeting their aspirations. In the 1961 matriculation results 178 out of 958 African candidates passed, three out of seven at Atteridgeville, fourteen out of thirty four at Kilnerton and none out of a matriculation class of sixteen at Lady Selbourne.[140]

It has been suggested above that in the course of the 1950s the ANC in Pretoria was in the process of acquiring a definite social character with a membership and leadership drawn increasingly from a working class background. This created a social space for local PAC activists; in very broad general terms from the little we know of its local following the PAC seems to have a more middle class character. A survey conducted in the Pretoria area and on the Rand in 1962 among a

small sample of professionals, teachers, clerks, students and school children revealed that a 57 per cent majority of the group preferred the PAC to the ANC. In the sample, a relatively high degree of education, youth, acceptance of violent political methods and support for the PAC tended to coincide.[141]

Commitment to either the PAC or ANC insurgents in Pretoria was socially exceptional. Even during the days of its legal existence the ANC was not a powerful movement. The community rallied behind it only sporadically at moments when an act by the authorities could be seen as a material injustice with an immediate effect on their daily lives. Africans in Pretoria during the 1950s and 1960s had yet to occupy strategic positions in the local political economy. Confined mainly to menial employment in commerce and services or in the least skilled sectors of industry they lacked the necessary confidence and resources for continuous participation in a political movement. In a particularly repressive local environment political activity of the type undertaken by Mokgatle, Magano, Tefu, Sello, Ntloedibe and Masemula to name a few in this narrative, required unusual reserves of imagination and courage.

Chapter Six - Notes and References

1. Gustav le Bon, 'The Psychology of Revolutions' in C. T. Paynton and Robert Blackey, Why Revolution?, Schenkman, Cambridge Mass., 1971, p. 175.

2. See Daily Despatch (East London), 7 May 1960, 11 May 1960 and 16 May 1960.

3. Daily Despatch, 29 May 1960 and 19 April 1960.

4. Ibid., 11 May 1960.

5. Ibid., 19 April 1960.

6. Ibid., 14 February 1963.

7. See for example report on State vs. Loliwe and three, Daily Despatch, 1 April 1965 and State vs. Silene and Tabane, Daily Despatch, 22 April 1967.

8. D. H. Reader, The Black Man's Portion, Oxford University Press, Cape Town, 1961, pp. 68-69.

9. Philip and Iona Mayer, Townsmen and Tribesmen, Oxford University Press, Cape Town, 1974, pp. 68-69.

10. Ibid., pp. 66-65.

11. Reader, op. cit., p. 99.

12. Union of South Africa, Native Affairs Department, Annual Reports, 1944-51.

13. Reader, op. cit.

14. Daily Despatch, 2 May 1946.

15. Advance, Cape Town, 16 April 1953.

16. Reader, op. cit., p. 42.

17. Daily Despatch, 19 November 1963.

18. Ibid., 6 September 1963.

19. Ibid., 19 February 1963.

20. Mayer, op. cit., p. 81.

21. Inkundla ya Bantu, 23 July 1949.

22. Ibid., 7 May 1949.

23. Daily Despatch, 16 February 1946.

24. Reader, op. cit., pp. 25-26.

25. Ibid., p. 30.

26. Clements Kadalie papers, African Studies Institute, University of the Witwatersrand, Clement Kadalie to Alexander Kadalie, 9 November 1944.

27. Author's interview with Mrs. Rose Schlacter (nee Behr), Johannesburg, July 1981.

28. Rheinallt-Jones papers, University of the Witwatersrand, Ja. 2. 11, 'African Trade Unions: minute attached to letter from CNETU, 4 May 1945.

29. Interview with Rose Schlacter.

30. See for example Port Elizabeth in Tom Lodge, African Politics in South Africa since 1945, Longman, London, 1983, pp. 51-55.

31. Kadalie papers, Clement Kadalie to Alexander Kafalie, 22 February 1943; Margaret Ballinger papers, University of the Witwatersrand, A 410, 13 2 14 5, Clement Kadalie to Margaret Ballinger, 29 July 1945.

32. Interview with C. J. Fazzie, East London, 1983. I am grateful to Mr. Mark Swilling for conducting this interview on my behalf.

33. Karis and Carter microfilm, Reel 10a 2X 924; Reel 11a, 2XL9.

34. Interview with C. J. Fazzie.

35. Karis and Carter microfilm, Reel 11a 2XL9.

36. Interview with C. J. Fazzie.

37. Who in 1950 complained to the Cape leadership of the Youth Leaguers' insubordination and ignorance of procedure. Karis and Carter microfilm, Reel 2b, 2 DA 16: 41/39.

38. Eastern Province Herald (Port Elizabeth), 27 June 1950.

39. Karis and Carter microfilm, Reel 10a, XF1.

40. Lodge, op. cit., p. 47.

41. Mda believed that 'the rural areas . . . would ultimately be as important as the cities in overthrowing white rule and he urged nationalist leaders to consider the careful building of a revolutionary 'basis in the reserves', and 'careful cultivation of a leadership from the ranks of rural intellectuals' . . . defined as clergy, lawyers and teachers, 'progressive farmers and progressive traders'. Gerhart, Black Power in South Africa, University of California, Berkerley, 1978, p. 131.

42. Bureau of African Nationalism, Political Commentaries, no. 1, SAIRR papers, AD 1189, ANC III, ANCYL, File 6.

43. W. B. Ngakane, 'Investigation into case histories of African juveniles involved in East London riots', SAIRR, Johannesburg, mimeo, 1953.

44. C. J. Fazzie, when interviewed, was fairly withering on the record of East London communists but it is possible that this passage contains distortions as it is based on his own highly subjective account.

45. The episode is described in Mayer, op. cit., p. 53.

46. This group in Orlando constituted themselves as a secret Africanist 'Central Committee' or 'Cencom'. See Gerhart, op. cit., p. 141.

47. Karis and Carter microfilm, Reel 10a, AFI.

48. In the interview he may have been confusing their role in the CYL in 1952 with the possibility of their involvement in the PAC. According to the biographical material in the Karis and Carter microfilm collection Gwentshe did return to East London at the end of the 1950s but Lengisi did not.

49. Mfaxa, in a better position to know, dissented from this view when interviewed. Karis and Carter microfilm, Reel 12a, 2XM 86.

50. Daily Despatch, 27 April 1963.

51. Ibid., 14 February 1963.

52. Ibid., 18 October 1963.

53. Ibid., 31 October 1963.

54. Ibid., 1 November 1963.

55. State vs. Colben Vuyani Mngaza, part of transcript held at University of York. Also press reports of trial in Daily Despatch, 28 June 1967 and 30 June 1967. C. J. Fazzie in his interview claimed he recruited Mngaza before the PAC's banning.

56. See Edward Feit, Urban Revolt in South Africa, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, 1971, p. 203.

57. All the above details drawn from State vs. M. J. M. Kondoti and 4 others, Queenstown, 1964, transcript held at SAIRR.

58. Vlakfontein was shortly to be renamed Mamelodi.

59. Population statistics from Pretoria News, 1 March 1960, 23 May 1960 and 24 September 1960.

60. 'Pretoria Group Areas proclaimed on 6 June 1958', SAIRR memo, 99/58, 24 June 1958, p. 3.

61. H. Cluver, Survey of Lady Selbourne, SAIRR, Johannesburg, 1954, p. 10 and p. 14.

62. Cluver, op. cit., p. 22.

63. Ibid., p. 14 and Pretoria News, 13 February 1960.

64. Pretoria News, 16 February 1962.

65. Hannah Stanton, Go Well, Stay Well, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1961, p. 49.

66. An outstanding description of Marabastad and its decline is in Ezekiel Mphahlele, Down Second Avenue, London, Faber, 1980, especially p. 151.

67. Pretoria News, 26 April 1961 and 13 July 1961.

68. Joint Council papers, University of the Witwatersrand, AD 1433, Cp 9 1, Pretoria Joint Council, File 3, Findings of a City Council social survey in Atteridgeville, July 1954.

69. Joint Council papers, Pretoria Joint Council, AD 1433, Cp 9 1, File 3, memorandum prepared by Pretoria Joint Council on Vlakfontein, 25 August 1954.

70. Joint Council papers, AD 1433, Cp 9 1, File 6, List of Bantu Secondary Schools giving instruction up to matriculation, 27 September 1958.

71. See profile in Imvo Zabantusundu (Kingwilliamstown), October 20 1962.

72. Interview with William Sebina Letlalo, Johannesburg, 1978, Letlalo, who participated in the campaign, provided in this interview the only detailed account of these incidents.

73. Peter Walshe, The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa, Hurst, London, p.

74. Naboth Mokgatle, Autobiography of an Unknown African, University of California, Berkerley, 1971, pp. 174-180.

75. Mphahlele, op. cit., p. 139.

76. Ibid., p. 222.

77. Judicial Commission of Enquiry, Pretoria Municipal Riot of 28 December 1942, Report, p. 40, SAIRR papers, University of the Witwatersrand, AD 843/ B 95 3.

78. Mokgatle, op. cit., pp. 227-244.

79. Baruch Hirson, 'The mines, the State, and African Trade Unions', unpublished seminar paper, p. 24.

80. Judicial Commission of Enquiry, p. 32.

81. Extract from evidence given by Transvaal CNETU to Industrial Legislation Commission, Rheinallt Jones papers, Ja 2 11. CNETU figures both at their peak and their decline were probably overestimations. 17,000 in 1942 would have represented a very high proportion of Africans in wage employment. The 1948 figure attributed 2,500 workers to the municipal Workers' Union, three times the figure given in the judicial commission of enquiry in 1943 when the Union was in its prime.

82. Mokgatle, op. cit., p. 249 and p. 264.

83. Ibid., p. 274.

84. Findlay papers, University of the Witwatersrand.

85. The first split in the South African Trades and Labour Council, the main federation for white industrial unions, came in 1948 in Pretoria when six unions broke away in opposition to the affiliation of African unions. Ken Luckhardt and Brenda Wall, Organize or Starve, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1980, p. 82.

86. Findlay papers, George Findlay's diary, vol. 1, p. 79.

87. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 54.

88. Ibid., vol. 2, entry for 16 February 1945.

89. Ibid., vol. 2, entry for 4 March 1945.

90. Mokgatle, op. cit., p. 281.

91. Republic of South Africa, Government Gazette, Pretoria, 16 November 1962, List of people associated with the Communist Party of South Africa. This list is not altogether accurate but in the case of the listed Pretoria members with those whom it has been possible to check it has proved correct.

92. Mokgatle, op. cit., p. 234.

93. Ibid., p. 284.

94. An extensive interview with Peter Magano provided the author with a list of office holders and members who could be cross references. Author's interview with Peter Magano, Johannesburg, 1982.

95. Interview with Peter Magano.

96. For its composition see Cluver, op. cit., p. 10 and p. 17.

97. Luckhardt and Wall, op. cit., p. 186.

98. Lodge, op. cit., p. 46.

99. Wages and incomes were lower than those in Alexandra, the centre of the boycott movement.

100. Margaret Ballinger papers, A 410, C 2 5 4, File 2, affidavits re. ANC meeting Eastwood, 18 January 1957.

101. Interview with Peter Magano.

102. Interview with Peter Magano. See also Ballinger papers, A 410, C 2 1 48.

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110. Contact, 25 July 1959.

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112. Contact, 10 July 1960.

113. Mokgatle, op. cit., p. 312.

114. Pretoria News, 21 March 1960.

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116. Ibid., 19 May 1960.

117. Ibid., 28 May 1960.

118. Ibid., 6 April 1960.

119. Ibid., 30 September 1960.

120. Contact, 3 December 1960.

121. Author's interview with Tommy Mohajane, York, 1975.

122. Azania News (Dar es Salaam), profile of E. D. Moseneke, 27 January 1966.

123. Gerhart, op. cit., p. 257.

124. State vs. Jeffrey Masemula and 15, Pretoria, June 1963, transcript held at University of York, p. 263.

125. Contact, 23 March 1961.

126. State vs. Masemula and 15; State vs. Isaac Mthimunye and 10; State vs. Dimake Malepe and 11; State vs. Dela Tsweleng and 12; State vs. Michael Maluleka and 7; State vs. Moses Makau and 11. Reports in Pretoria News, April-September 1963.

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128. Ibid., 10 June 1963.

129. Ibid., 12 July 1963.

130. Ibid., 17 June 1963.

131. Ibid.

132. Ibid., 26 September 1963.

133. Ibid., 14 June 1963.

134. Feit, op. cit., pp. 183-188.

135. See Pretoria News, 12 March 1960 and 16 June 1962 and Contact, 2 November 1961.

136. Contact, 10 September 1960.

137. Pretoria News, 19 May 1961; 30 June 1961.

138. Pretoria News, 27 May 1961.

139. See for example Pretoria News, 21 April 1961 for report of increase of 'Tsotsism' in Atteridgeville.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

POQO AND RURAL RESISTANCE IN THE TRANSKEI - 1960-1963

Between 1961 and 1963 there were indications of Poqo activity in nine districts in the South Western part of the Transkei. The support for Poqo in this region was part of a wider movement of peasant reaction to state efforts to reshape the local political economy. Transkeian peasant resistance was not exceptional, the processes which gave rise to it were national in their scope and were fundamental features of South Africa's economic development. This chapter begins at this very general level by surveying the evolution of the economic and political strategies implemented by the state in the countryside. It will then discuss the local historical background to the Transkeian unrest before turning to the development of the Poqo movement in this region.

For over two decades, between 1940 and the mid-1960s, within the areas designated for African occupation by the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts, there was a succession of bitter localised conflicts between peasants and authority. During the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, the state played an increasingly interventionist role in the countryside. The reserves were needed for new economic and political functions, and a series of attempts were made to restructure them accordingly. Established social relationships were to be disrupted, in the process traditional authority was to be robbed of what legitimacy it retained and the hostile interface between people and government was to swiftly expand. Popular reactions to the

reshaping of rural societies were widespread and rather bloodier than those occurring in an urban context. This was partly because the manner in which they were dealt with could be considerably more brutal than if they had occurred in cities but also because the conditions of rural existence were even harsher than those that prevailed in the townships.

Government policy in black occupied portions of the countryside should be understood within the broad context of the South African political economy. The boundaries of 'reserves' (later 'Bantustans' and 'homelands', today 'black states') were fixed by two pieces of legislation, the 1913 Land Act and the 1936 Native Trust and Land Bill. The Land Act set aside the swiftly diminishing areas under African communal tenure as reserved for African occupation and prohibited African land purchase outside their borders. It also set out, with limited success, to restrict the growth of African squatting on white-owned farmland. The 1936 legislation amplified the anti-squatting provisions of the 1913 act, actually making squatting illegal (a provision which was not enforced until a decade later), and establishing a Native Trust to buy up land in 'released areas' to be occupied and farmed by Africans under stringent supervision by Trust officials.

Much has been written about the changing purposes these reserves served in the development of South Africa's industrial economy and what follows is a very bare condensation.[1] The original function of the reserves was to subsidise the costs of mine labour. In other words, mine owners could pay migrant black mine workers wages which were set below the minimum

subsistence needs for themselves and their dependents. The balance would be made up by agricultural production carried out by the miner's family and himself between contracts. Moreover the retention of linkages with a rural economy obviated the need for employers to pay pensions or to carry any other social welfare costs. However, this system had as its premise a rising level of production in the reserves. The tight limits set on African land occupation, the expansion of population within these limits and the removal of the healthiest and strongest members of the population for increasingly long periods as tax obligations and other cash needs grew greater was inimical to rising production. By the 1920s, agricultural output (both stock and crops) per head was falling and though economic historians disagree as to exactly when the 'collapse' of reserve agriculture took place, by the 1930s, the inability of some of the reserves to provide sufficient food for their inhabitants was arousing official concern. A confidential report on conditions in the Transkei and Ciskei commissioned by the Chamber of Mines concluded that 'semi starvation is a very insecure basis with which to build a permanent labour supply'.[2] Within these reserves access to land and stock had become concentrated (so that growing numbers of people were landless or stockless or both). Moreover, cash agriculture was carried out at the expense of food production: wool production for the market which mainly benefited headmen and chiefs in the words of the Chamber of Mines report was 'driving cattle off the land' (as well as substantially contributing to its deterioration).[3]

Proclamation 31 of 1939 which outlined a programme of livestock limitation and land conservation measures, the 'betterment' scheme, was together with the Native Trust regulations outlined in the 1936 act, the first attempt by the state to deal systematically with this situation. Wartime manpower shortages delayed the energetic implementation of any such measures. Mining was to find other sources of cheap mining labour: by 1946 only 41 per cent of mining labour came from within South Africa's borders.[4] Meanwhile the labour requirements of an expanding manufacturing industry came not from the reserves but from white-owned farms when labour tenancy arrangements were becoming increasingly disadvantageous to the tenants.

The industrialisation of the 1940s presented South Africa's rulers with two sets of problems. First there were the social and political tensions resulting from rapid urbanisation and proletarianisation. Second there was the imbalance of labour supply between different sectors of the economy: farmers were unable to offer wages to compete with manufacturing and by the close of the decade were experiencing an acute shortage of labour. The reserves were affected by the resolution of both sets of problems. They no longer had any direct economic function but instead performed a crucial role in the process of controlling African labour. Responding to the needs of commercial agriculture, the post-1948 Nationalist government sought to redeploy labour in its direction by centralising and streamlining controls on the movement of labour. The 1952 Native Laws Amendment Act made section 10 of the Urban Areas

Act automatically applicable to every municipality and divided the country into prescribed (urban) and non-prescribed (rural) areas, movement between them being subjected to strict official sanctions. Labour Bureaux, which began to be established in the countryside in 1949, dictated the channels along which labour could flow. Control of labour mobility was to be facilitated by a new system of pass documents incorporating photographs and fingerprints. In recognition of the increasingly important role they had in the industrial workforce this system was to be extended to women under the 1952 mystifyingly entitled 'Abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents Act'. To encourage a more efficient use of labour by farmers and the stimulation of mechanised agriculture, anti-squatting legislation was enacted in 1954 which inter alia relieved the state of the legal requirement to find new land for displaced squatters. Squatters in peri-urban areas (that is those who lived just outside towns so they could take up urban employment but evade municipal influx controls) were prohibited in 1951. The overall effect of these measures was to massively enlarge the reserve populations as various groups were excluded from the urban economy and forced back into the reserves. They were joined by displaced labour tenants, squatters and the inhabitants of 'black spots'.[5]

To meet these new burdens there would be a substantial reorganisation of life in the reserves. Conceding that they could no longer provide a significant proportion of the subsistence needs of many of their inhabitants, it was proposed to regroup people in non agricultural villages, which would

function as labour dormitories for decentralised industry. For the rest of the population, access to and the use of grazing and cultivated land, would be subjected to an increased range of controls and theoretically self-imposed voluntary measures, such as stock limitation. This would serve to check the now alarming ecological crisis apparent in all the reserves. To enforce and supervise 'rehabilitation' in the face of continued resistance to it and providing a cheap repressive administration for a potentially rebellious population, local government was reshaped in an authoritarian fashion under the 1953 Bantu Authorities Act. As policy developed in the 1950s wealth and power became concentrated at the local level around compliant chiefs and their acolytes. Their political aspirations would be met through the construction of quasi-independent administrations of each reserve or group of reserves. By the end of the period the main function of the reserves would be in the displacement of socio-political tensions from the towns to the countryside where they could be more ruthlessly controlled and constituted less of a threat. To put it more brutally, the problems of the weak, the unemployed and the starving would be relocated to where they mattered only to those who were personally affected by them.

Let us look at the effects these changes had on rural life. They can be divided into three groups: those arising from attempts to regenerate production; the effects of political restructuring; and the results of new controls on mobility. The scheme for 'reclamation' of the reserves had two main features: limitation of stock to what was conceived to be the

land's carrying capacity and the redivision of the land into residential, cultivation and grazing areas. Kraals would no longer be scattered but grouped together 'in convenient small villages'.[6] Those people without access to land would live in rural townships. Land would be reserved for forestry schemes and access to these for firewood would be restricted. The betterment scheme was at its inception meant to be voluntary, its adoption depending on acceptance by meetings convened by chiefs or headmen in each rural location. In many cases such meetings could not have been very representative, as one of the Ciskeian General Councillors admitted in 1947:

> In some places the people have accepted the betterment proclamation but if you ask them personally you will find they know nothing of the whole affair. 7

or as another observed in 1951:

> in my location, when the scheme was accepted it was accepted by educated men, who went behind our backs. 8

In general support for the scheme came for the 'land-owning types of natives . . . the man who makes his living from the land and works it from January to December'.[9] Such people by definition tended to be a privileged minority.[10]

In 1949 rehabilitation regulations were proclaimed placing great powers in the hands of Agricultural officers who would 'excise areas needing special care' and allocate land for different purposes. However, despite their efforts, the Native Affairs Department in 1954 had to tacitly admit defeat with a switch over to a less complicated and more extensive conservation system it called 'stabilisation' which had as its objective the prevention of further deterioration rather than

'reclamation'. But by this stage the department was looking forward to when conservation measures would be 'linked up with the traditional tribal system of government . . . constituted under the Bantu Authorities Act', a system which would not depend on popular sanction.[11]

Land reclamation was extremely unpopular. Native Affairs Department officials regularly complained 'suspicion' and opposition from 'recalcitrant tribal communities' to their proposals. But hostility to the scheme came often from those whom one might have expected to be least conservative: as one rural District Commissioner plaintively put it in 1952 'the younger men are taking control in the districts'.[12] Quite apart from emotional or ideological objections to rehabilitation, it was regarded with very real fear by people who depended on a very narrow margin for physical survival. Stock culling was aimed initially at the removal of weaker animals and reductions could take place with no regard of size of herd.[13] Dipping tanks were disliked as these were sometimes used to enforce culling and castration as well as a way for the chiefs to collect unofficial levies.[14]

A minimum of three cattle was needed to ensure a regular milk supply for household consumption.[15] Those with such a number were relatively fortunate. In seven Transkeian districts as early as 1941, 44 per cent of the homesteads were found to own no cattle at all.[16] For such people access to cultivable land was crucial. But this was becoming more difficult. The new demarcation of fallow areas removed from some people a vital source of food.

Landless households were sometimes deprived of access to grazing and more generally common pastureland in practice shrunk as officials fenced off forbidden grazing camps. Prohibitions on tree felling for people who could not afford to buy fuel contravened a customary right of free access to firewood.[17] Villagisation policies especially among people who did not live in villages (such as the Cape Nguni) aroused resentment. They offended custom and in any case lengthened the walk to the fields. Material considerations aside there were other objections to the scheme. First of all cattle represented wealth, savings and security. Secondly, the interference of Native Affairs Department officials into matters which previously were the concern of chiefs or headmen - land allocation or the regulation of the agricultural cycle - reduced the popular standing of the latter and could conflict with the principle that each household had sufficient for its needs. Meyer, writing of 'red' communities in the Transkei suggests that the loss by lineage elders of their function in advising headmen in land allocation, undermined 'red' ideology and social solidarity as elders lost their main sphere of authority.[18] Women also suffered from the new system of land allocation, losing their customary right to a field of their own as land was usually only allotted to men as heads of households.[19]

The other main objection to the betterment scheme and its successors was that they did nothing to solve what many people felt to be the most pressing problem. As one of the Ciskeian Councillors pointed out in the Council's rejection of the Reclamation Scheme in 1945:

> most of the land is given to the few and the smallest piece is given to the many and the result is that they are grouped together with their stock, which brings about soil erosion . . . If we reduce the stocks we deprive the people of food and milk. 20

Acceptance of reclamation, betterment, rehabilitation or stabilisation implied acceptance of the way land had been apportioned in the first place. And the injustice of that division was being compounded every day as more and more people were being forced back into the reserves: the squatters, the inhabitants of black spots, the urban employed: between 1955 and 1969 the average population density in the reserves rose from 60 to 110.[21]

Closely related with economic reorganisation was the redefinition of political institutions under the Bantu Authorities Act. The architects of the new system took as their model the British colonial native authority. Local government would be based on tribal institutions in which chiefs and headmen would have greatly enhanced executive powers. The size and composition of each tribal authority would be decided by the Department for Native Affairs. The system, in the case of the Ciskei and Transkei, replaced a partly elected District Council system, and more generally removed the consensual element in the relationship between chiefs and their communities, making chiefs answerable to the Department rather than their subjects. The scope and sanctions of chiefs' judicial powers were considerably extended. In brief chiefs were made responsible for the local maintenance of law and order and the implementation of government-inspired measures - including of course the rehabilitation scheme. As far as traditional leaders were

concerned, the attractions of the new order were uncertain. It enhanced their local powers but detracted from their legitimacy as they became responsible for implementing unpopular laws. Nevertheless, collaboration with the Department brought with it increased wealth and ascendancy for some chiefs over less compliant rivals. The system encouraged a trend towards despotism: those who profited most were often those whose traditional status was at best doubtful. In the self-conscious oratory of Bantu Affairs Department officials chiefs were incited to:

> Be your own police in your own interest, find out those men who respect authority and tribal institutions and band them together as the chief's and headmen's impi which will turn out when called to help your tribes and locations to be clean and well behaved . . . Use moderate violence . . . just like a good chief should do. 22

But quite apart from the burdens imposed by abuse of new powers, the system was to bring with it less arbitrary obligations.

The Bantu Authorities system included an attempt to cheapen for the government the cost of administration through extending the rural tax base.[23] In the Transkei direct taxation almost doubled between 1955 and 1959[24] and throughout the whole country African convictions for tax defaulting leapt from 48,000 in 1950 to 179,000 in 1960.[25]

The final element in rural discontent was provided by the tightening of influx/efflux controls and the population resettlements of the 1950s and 1960s. The extension of pass laws appeared to rural women as a direct threat to the security

and integrity of the household. Such anxieties would have had an especial force in communities where because of the prolonged absence of male migrant workers, the energetic and active members of the community were female. Insofar as the reorganisation of agriculture limited access to land it was a source of especial concern to those denied by influx control a permanent base in the urban economy and compelled to depend for their ultimate security on land or stock. For example, in 1951 a Ciskeian Native Commissioner claimed that opposition came mainly from 'the industrial native . . . they do not beneficially occupy that land, but they are not prepared to lose their stake in that land'.[26] With resettlement under the Group Areas Act whole districts could be threatened with expropriation and incorporation into the ever-growing ranks of the rural landless and unemployed.

Rebellion and revolt in the Southern Transkei should be viewed against a background of unrest which affected almost all of South Africa's African rural communities between 1940 and 1965. The main peaks of this disaffection were in the Zoutpansberg and Sekhukuniland in the early 1940s (today Venda and Lebowa), in the tiny Free State reserve of Witzieshoek in the early 1950s (Basotu Qua Qua), in the Marico reserve in 1958 (Eastern Bophuthatswana), Sekhukuniland again in 1958 to 1959, the Natal reserves in 1958 and 1959, in Mpondoland, Transkei, 1960 and in the Tembu districts of the Southwestern Transkei between 1960 and 1963. Also throughout this period the Ciskeian territories were in a state of constant ferment. These events have only recently begun to attract the attention of historians though

already there exists a substantial literature on some of them.[27] The Tembu disturbances which provide the focus of this chapter have not been among these with the exception of an early research paper by this author. This neglect is a little surprising; though the Tembu unrest lacks the structured and unified qualities of the Mpondo rebellion to its north, it was sustained over a relatively long period, it received considerable contemporary newspaper publicity, and to a much greater extent than any of the other rural resistance movements cited above it involved a national political organisation.

The following Transkeian magisterial districts were affected by Poqo activity: Engcobo, Glen Grey, Idutywa, Kentani, Mqanduli, Ngqeleni, St. Marks, Umtata and Willowvale. Of these five were inhabited by members of the Tembu tribe (Engcobo, Glen Grey, Mqanduli, St. Marks and Umtata) while the other four accommodated Xhosa, Mpondo and Mfengu groups. The Tembu districts were linked with each other administratively by the authority of a paramount chief. Tembu, Xhosa, Mpondo and Mfengu are culturally similar peoples who speak the same language. These districts though classified for administrative reasons as, for example, Tembu or Mpondo, were in fact heterogeneous. The nine districts form a single block of territory extending for about 250 miles from the Southwestern borders of the Transkei to the Eastern coastal areas. They encompass the three main topographical regions of the territory: the Western highlands, undulating flat-country in the centre and the more broken Eastern coastal region. The especially poor communications[28] and acute shortage of cultivable land in the West is reflected

in the varying population densities of each district: those nearest the coast are most crowded.[29] In conformity with this pattern of the nine districts Engcobo was in 1951 the most sparsely inhabited with seventy-four people per square mile and Willowvale with 117 per square mile the most heavily populated.[30] The Transkeian landscape, typically open grassland, is often badly eroded because of land shortage and consequent over-grazing. The impact of erosion in the nine districts ranged from the relatively favourable situation in Kentani where 40 per cent of the land was free of erosion to St. Marks where 92.6 per cent of the land was eroded, 50.2 per cent badly.[31]

Of the Transkei's 1,400,000 inhabitants in 1960, 160,000 were recruited annually to work on the mines, in industry and in agriculture.[32] In 1960, 61,237 were employed as mine workers. It seems reasonable to assume that about 25,000 people were employed in agriculture (the 1971 figures of 22,383 was after a decade of reducing the number of black farm workers in the Western Cape).[33] The rest would mainly have been recruited by Labour Bureaux for industries and services in the urban areas. Francis Wilson reports that in 1972, 69 per cent of the men so recruited worked in the Cape Town area, 18 per cent in the Transvaal and a small proportion elsewhere. The proportions would not have been very different ten years before: Hammond-Tooke reporting from Umtata and Willowvale in 1956 stated that the Western Province towns were the most popular centres for migrants because they tended to offer higher wages than the work available to Transkeians in other centres.[34] Migrants on mine labour contracts were restricted by the compound system, but

the men and women who worked in industry or services were more exposed to urban political influences, and it is therefore worth emphasising that in the Southern Transkei it is likely that the majority of industrial or service migrant workers oscillated between the Transkei and the Western Cape.

With the exception of a small number of government servants, the population either depended to a lesser or greater extent on wages remitted by migrants or were able to produce enough food from farms to subsist. Bearing in mind the density of settlement and the rate of labour migration it is reasonable to conclude that a very high proportion of the Transkeian population were supported by migrant earnings. Of 759 households in Kentani, Tsolo and Umtata districts consulted in a survey carried out in 1974, 467 never harvested enough food for their consumption: sixty-two of these undertook no farming at all and 613 produced only for subsistence. It is unlikely that self sufficiency would have been much more extensive in the 1960s.[35] In 1943 landlessness was said to affect 25 per cent of the married males (who by definition were entitled to allotment) in seven Transkeian districts: Butterworth, Idutywa, Nqamaka, Tsomo, Umtata, Xalanga and Engcobo.[36]

Until 1955 the Transkei was governed through a complex system of administration based upon a heirarchy of magistrates responsible ultimately to the ministry of Native Affairs. The magistrate of each district presided over a headman who normally had the function of allocating land and registering tax payers. A limited degree of representation was allowed through the Glen

Grey system: from 1927 location boards, district councils, and a Transkeian territorial general council (Bunga) were empowered to raise and spend revenues for road and bridge construction, irrigation schemes and dipping tanks. The location boards, appointed from local landholders, elected six of the twelve councils in each district and these elected 108 of the 138 general council members. Opportunities for popular participation in such a system were very limited and the councils' composition demonstrated the degree to which it reflected the concerns of the more affluent.[37] Under this system chiefs had little executive power and partly because of this retained considerable moral authority. In Tembuland and Mpondoland chiefs had a greater degree of influence over land allocation than elsewhere.[38] Chiefs together with headmen contributed to the greater proportion of Bunga members.

The Bantu Authorities system introduced in 1955 contained no provisions for any form of elected representation. Tribal, district, regional and territorial authorities were to be established. They were to be composed of official nominees and chiefs. Chiefs' powers were to be enhanced and headmen were placed under the authority of chiefs. The system gave to chiefs greater scope to impose local taxes and levies. As we have seen, under the system chiefs were now responsible for land allocation as well as the administration of rehabilitation measures. In Tembuland where chiefs in any case influenced the allocation of unsurveyed land and where the implementation of the system involved establishing a new paramountcy from Glen Grey, Cala and St. Marks districts the chiefs viewed the new authorities especially ambivalently.

Certainly their new status could bring material benefits: for example the new Transkeian Territorial Authority, the apex of the local Bantu Authority system resolved to give to chiefs an extra portion of arable land 'to enable (the chiefs) to provide hospitality'.[39] But the new responsibilities for land administration whatever the opportunities they offered for private appropriation of land were not always welcomed by the chiefs. In May 1961 over 1,000 Tembu chiefs condemned the rehabilitation scheme (the 'Native Trust') at a meeting called by Sabata Dalindyebo, the paramount chief. Tembuland was almost completely free of rehabilitation at that time.[40] Contact mentions in its report 'good' chiefs who had delayed imposing the scheme by insisting that they should act as their people required them to. In contrast to this, in the district of St. Marks which was under the authority of the Emigrant Tembu Chief and Chairman of the Transkei Territorial Authority, Kaiser Matanzima, the scheme was 'accepted' at meetings held in locations in 1960. The meetings were called by the District Magistrate and he later claimed that the proposals were accepted by everybody at the meetings. Rather inconsistently he also said that after the proposals had been accepted '100 per cent' illegal meetings began to be held all over the district and a number of people belonging to anti-rehabilitation groups were arrested.[41] He also made the interesting admission that compensation was not paid to those who had been removed from the land until the last person had moved 'voluntarily'.[42] Matanzima's district was to include the site of a large show-piece irrigation scheme. 2,400

consolidated farming plots were to be produced, and from trial evidence we know that people were being displaced from the land from 1962.[43]

Matanzima though was one of the most important beneficiaries of the new order. The creation of an Emigrant Tembu paramountcy in 1956 elevated him from the position of a minor chief to a peer of Sabata Dalindyebo the Tembu paramount. This action contributed to Tembu chiefly opposition to the Bantu Authorities Scheme: it reduced the extent of Chief Dalindyebo's paramountcy, in contrast to chiefs elsewhere the land allocation rights were never ones over which they had totally lost jurisdiction and it gave to them the unpopular duty of administering land rehabilitation. Land rehabilitation proposals, including in 1960 the concentration of holdings into 'economic units', taken to their logical conclusion would have displaced 113,000 families in the Transkei.[44] A four-man delegation representing the paramount was sent in 1958 to Pretoria to protest against the implementation of the Bantu Authorities. Members of the delegation were deported.

Whereas it seems likely that Tembu chiefs still retained considerable popular legitimacy not all opposition to rehabilitation and the new political structures was channelled through them. The existence of the African Cape franchise before 1956 had stimulated the development of political organisations in the area. In the 1940s and 1950s the All African Convention a federal coordinating political centre had some influence in the Transkei through its affiliates, the Cape African Teachers Association and the Transkei Organised

Bodies. The TOB itself a federal structure claimed in 1952 the allegiance of fifteen different organisations, mainly farmers associations and location vigilante groups. In the later 1950s the AAC campaigned quite extensively in the Southern Transkei against the land rehabilitation proposals.[45] The AAC confined itself to agitation and public meetings but from 1960 disaffection began to be expressed increasingly violently.

From the foregoing analysis this violence can be attributed to several factors. In a socio-economic context in which human survival rested on a precarious combination of subsistence farming and wage labour the threat posed by rehabilitation would have sometimes appeared very menacing. The refashioning of local government was done in such a way as to detract from its legitimacy. It is possible that after 1960 the pressure on local economic resources was accentuated by the impact of Western Cape resettlement and tightening influx control. Bearing in mind that Tembu labour migration was particularly oriented to the Western Cape it is also reasonable to conclude that political events in the Western Cape affecting the migrant community there would have had a rebounding impact in Tembuland.

In outline, the Tembu disturbances were sporadic and disjointed though they were sustained over a surprisingly long period. It is important to remember that much of the unrest in Tembu areas occurred under the conditions imposed on the Transkei by Proclamation 400. This, from 30 November, 1960, provided for a State of Emergency. The regulations included detention without trial, the banning of virtually all meetings and the

extension of the powers of chiefs and headmen. People who challenged chiefs' authority could be fined or imprisoned and have some of their livestock confiscated. The proclamation was published in immediate response to the Mpondo uprising.

Before examining the local development of the Poqo movement it is useful to have some knowledge of the wider context of resistance to rehabilitation and Bantu authorities in the region. Attacks on headmen, chiefs, and White traders (unpopular because of their effective monopoly and consequent high prices) were publicly reported quite frequently after 1960. For example in 1960 in Tembuland one chief and eleven other people regarded as government accomplices were killed.[46] Nineteen cases of violence against whites, mainly traders, were reported as having taken place in the Southern Transkei between 1958 and early 1963.[47] Much of the violence was concentrated in the Emigrant Tembu districts[48] in which headmen and chiefs under Matanzima's direction had been especially officious in promoting rehabilitation. Since 1956 several chiefs and headmen who had not cooperated with these efforts had been replaced, often to accompaniment of popular protest.[49] It seems likely that much of this violence was attributable to organised groups. An informant who grew up in Cala during this period testifies to the development of groups known as the Amajacob. The Amajacob were derived from the location based groups of youths who before circumcision would withdraw over weekends to the mountainous areas near their villages and take part in ritual stick fights with groups from other locations. These gangs, Amabhungas, would later provide the basis of social

cohesion among men from a certain area while they were on labour contracts. From 1960, according to this informant, these gangs began to oppose land rehabilitation measures by destroying fences and killing headmen and their supporters. It was at this point that in Cala the Amabhunga took the name Amajacob. The Amajacob were based on age sets and different groups were composed of men from different generations; the gangs were no longer exclusively recruited from young men. The Amajacob were especially active in Cala as a result of the resettlements arising from the irrigation scheme in which previous smallholders were 'packed together like a township'.[50] Contract workers returning from Cape Town during the 1960s troubles had frequently been beaten up by Matanzima's men and this fuelled popular resentement.[51] The name 'Amajacob' was first used by a peasant organisation which was formed in the mid 1950s in Glen Grey under the auspices of the All African Convention.[52] The President of the AAC, W. M. Tsotsi, probably suggested the use of the term Jacobite from which the Xhosa word was adapted. As with the traditional Amabhungas the Amajacob groups existed both in the Transkei and among migrant communities in towns. In 1963 it was claimed that there were Amajacobs in Langa.[53] This was never confirmed by court evidence but it does seem that during 1962 'home boy' associations in Langa were being mobilised into resistance. Five Langa migrants were found guilty of murdering a Glen Grey chief, Mtshiza Mtirara. They had belonged to a 'home boy' group. This group, led by men who had been working in Cape Town for one or two decades and prompted by reports of opposition to 'bad laws' and subsequent mistreatment of their people, decided to kill the chief.[54]

From early 1963 the authorities began to systematically attempt to suppress the activities of the Amajacob. In doing so they often raised the tempo of local violence. One trial documents the effects of this process in Qitsi Location, St. Marks, a known area of Amajacob activity.[55] On the 11th February the local headman was provided with some police from Qamata and with these and other men he raided the kraals of leading critics of the land rehabilitation measures. Their houses were destroyed and some of their stock was taken.[56] However, the anti-trust men had already left Qitsi and found shelter in a kraal in Qulugu, Engcobo district, eight miles away across the hills. Quite apart from the headman's action there was considerable anger in Qitsi because Matanzima had sent a large impi which included fifty policemen to search the area (possibly for Poqo men) and the location had had to provide food for them. There had also been removals. Though the headman was known to be rather reluctant to do so, he had had to organise the fencing: he had thus become 'the man who informs the people about the regulations'.[57] The bitterness of the feeling against him can be judged from the fact that among the men who killed him were two nephews and a man known to be 'a very great friend' of the headman.[58]

These men decided to kill the headman when they were at Qulugu. In accordance with an established custom, they sent him a threatening letter which resulted in him being given a bodyguard and a revolver. The group at Qulugu were first treated by a herbalist who made incisions on their arms, foreheads and cheek-bones. Then, on the night of the 26th,

they marched to Qitsi, overpowered the bodyguards, dragged the headman out of his kraal and killed him. His family were allowed to leave the hut, which was then burned down. There had been no attempt at secrecy (the bodyguards were permitted to escape) and shortly afterwards the conspirators were arrested.

This process of resistance emerging from existing social networks originally established for quite different purposes can also be seen in the transformation of the Makuluspan, an organisation which began functioning outside Tembuland but which by 1963 was reported to be active in the Engcobo district.[59] Makuluspan was formed in 1955 in Qumbu and Tsolo districts after a recent increase in the incidence of stock theft (itself possibly a symptom of the growing numbers of stockless and landless people). Local vigilante groups in different locations combined into a centralised organisation with a chairman, secretary and treasurer which imposed communal levies and convicted stock thieves in its night-time tribunals. Thieves who failed to answer its summonses had their homesteads burned down and were sometimes murdered. Having established themselves as an alternative source of justice to the authorities who had failed to take decisive action against the stock thieves it was but a short step for the Makuluspan to challenge the legitimacy of authority. In 1960 three identifiable Makuluspan leaders had been deported and from this point while continuing its activities against stock thieves Makuluspan began to attack headmen and chiefs who supported the Bantu Authorities system.[60]

By the time therefore that the first Poqo groups began to form in the Western Cape in 1961 there was already in existance

in parts of the Transkei a network of clandestine organisations with outposts in the Cape Town townships in the form of home boy associations. This extensive sub-culture of resistance helps to explain the degree of Poqo influence in the Transkei.

Poqo inspired action in the Transkei falls into two categories, first those actions initiated from outside the territory by Cape Town based groups of migrant workers and secondly those which depended upon local organisation. In the first category were the two attempts by Poqo groups to assassinate Matanzima on October 14th and December 13th 1962. Both were similar but detail is available only for the one in December.

On 12th December, a group of between twenty and thirty Poqo members travelled by train from Cape Town to the Transkei, with the intention of assembling with other groups near Qamata and launching a co-ordinated attack on Christmas Day on Matanzima's palace. According to the trial evidence, similar groups had already left Cape Town.[61] Most of the twenty men later put on trial had been Poqo members since early 1961, but though there had been several meetings in the previous months the immediate preparations for the attack were only discussed at a meeting in Langa township on December 10th. At this and subsequent meetings members were told to contribute £6 for the railway ticket and to collect weapons. The attack was going to incorporate the freeing of prisoners in Qamata jail who had been captured in earlier attempts on Matanzima's life. On the night before their departure a herbalist doctored the men by making incisions on the foreheads and rubbing herbs.[62] Their weapons, which included a revolver carried by the cell's leader, were also treated. The herbalist was later arrested and tried in 1967.

According to his own testimony he was the head of the 'White Brotherhood Lodge of Nigeria'. He earned money selling clothes and canvassing for subscriptions to the Lodge. The Lodge was called by some of its members Qamata, the Xhosa designation for the supreme being (a concept which preceded Christianity and which was not synonymous with the Christian God).[63] Fortified with their medicine, the men entrained the following morning. Most of them had not had the chance to give their employers any excuse for leaving their jobs and so, as well as forfeiting their pay packets, had come away without getting their pass books signed. Their trains arrived at Queenstown at 7.00 p.m. on the 13th. Here it was obvious that the police had been warned because they ordered everybody off the train and made them line up on the platform, where they began searching the passengers for weapons. On the police's discovery of a panga, the Poqo men made a concerted attack on the police, killing one of them and wounding several others. After a few minutes of fighting, police reinforcements arrived and the Poqo men retreated and tried to escape to a nearby hillside. Most were captured within the next day or two. Another group who had journeyed from Cape Town a few days earlier had succeeded in reaching Ntlonze mountain near Cofimvaba, the rallying point for the attackers[64] but by now large impis and police units were searching the hills. Twenty Poqo men were later captured and a further seven were killed by the police.[65]

The conspirators were all migrant workers; most of them did unskilled work in the construction industry or in various factories. They were mainly Emigrant Tembu from Glen Grey, Cala

and St. Marks districts. Their wives and families were mentioned in the evidence as living in these places. It is clear that they regarded the Transkei as their home, and the evidence describing the various Poqo meetings in Langa indicates that they shared the same anxieties and preoccupations as the rural Tembu population. One was arrested with a letter from his mother in his pocket which contained a reference to his land being taken away;[66] this was a predominating theme at meetings in Langa:

> The first thing he (Matanzima) did was to introduce fencing and now he is moving huts and kraals to some other place. It appears that he has sold the plots where the kraals were to the Europeans because there are huts there. Now he is assaulting us . . . 67
>
> Chief Matanzima has sold our land; we are going to kill him. 68

The fencing and the activities of the Native Rehabilitation Trust in St. Marks began to be discussed at Langa Poqo meetings in July 1962. There was also said at these meetings that Kaiser Matanzima was responsible for the removal of Africans from the Western Cape.[69]

The extent and nature of Poqo's following inside the Transkei has already been discussed in Chapter 4. Unfortunately, newspaper reportage on Transkeian conspiracies is usually cryptic and there are few trial transcripts available. Our picture therefore has to remain incomplete. The most prominent themes in the discussion at Poqo meetings are ones which should now be familiar. In Mqanduli district people were told:

> Whites should be killed. It was said that the Whites were worrying us about taxes and they wanted to fence our land. At the meeting they talked only of these things. 70

In Engcobo school children were incited to burn down trading stores and kill their owners.[71] Not all matters discussed were exclusively rural: passes, wages and Bantu education were also discussed in meetings in Engcobo and Willowvale districts.[72] As with the Cape Town groups the Transkeian Poqo members employed magical protections: men in Baziya Location, Umtata District, had medicine rubbed into scars on their foreheads and were told that when they 'fought the Europeans the bullets from their guns would turn to water'.[73]

The most violent act attributable to Poqo in the Transkei was the killing of five white people, two roadmakers and the wife and two daughters of one of them, near Bashee Bridge, Umtata District, during the night of 4th-5th February, 1963. The victims were hacked to death with pangas, axes and assegais and their caravans were set alight and their possessions chopped up and burned.

Twenty-three men from Mputi Location, Umtata, were convicted and hanged for murder. The roadmakers' camp was on the edge of the location. According to the prosecutor the killings followed the establishment of a Poqo cell and a succession of meetings. The objective of the killings, the prosecutor claimed, 'was to test the bravery of the organisation for future operations'.[74] The trial reports tell us little about the identity of the accused except that they were residents of Mputi, that some of them were farmers, that many were closely related to each other and that they were part of a larger body of men, some from the neighbouring Tsolo and Engcobo districts.[75] The Poqo cell had been started in November 1962 when its founder, Nqaba Memani, returned from Langa, Cape Town.[76]

The Bashee Bridge murders took place in an area which was considered by the authorities to have the highest level of unrest in the Transkei.[77] Mputi is near the Western border of Umtata adjoining Engcobo District. It is mountainous and extensively forested. The location had a dense population in 1956 of 2,000 people, 800 of these men, and was one of the most congested and badly eroded in the district.[78] In 1958 the location headman had been deported from the Transkei[79] for opposing land rehabilitation measures (Mputi Location was one of five declared as betterment areas in the district). Mputi's situation on the Engcobo District border may have been significant. Engcobo was known as 'the most lawless area of the Transkei'.[80] There the Bantu Authorities system had virtually broken down: at the beginning of 1963 the chief of the Amaquati had resigned following an attempt on his life[81] while the other main chief, Chief Nkosana Mtirara, who had jurisdiction over the remaining eighteen locations was to be himself convicted of Poqo activities.[82] The Makuluspan was also in the process of establishing itself in the Engcobo District in the vicinity of Mputi Location.[83] A visitor to the region reported:

> Tembus of Engcobo District are one of the best organised groups and are suspicious of strangers. After a warning by a Tembu tribesman not to travel through the Engcobo Locations at night, as we would encounter the Makuluspan, we took the warning lightly. It was a nightmare journey through the locations. We met several people on horse-back from different locations travelling in the same direction. They may have been going to a private meeting. Who knows? [84]

With this background the Bashee Bridge murders became slightly easier to comprehend. They occurred in an area of

considerable socio-economic stress, in a context in which local authority had been under challenge for several years before the inception of Poqo, and where with the Makuluspan there was in existence an extensive network of insurgent organisation. The precise motivation, though, of the killings or the details of the local Poqo structure do not emerge from the trial evidence. The unfortunate victims were new to the district, so they were chosen for what they represented rather than for whom they were, though it is possible that the new road they were constructing may not have been locally popular.[85] Another roadmaker whose camp was three quarters of a mile away had been threatened three weeks before the killings.[86] But without any knowledge of the individual backgrounds of the insurgents it is impossible to provide an adequate explanation of their actions.

In 1963 peasant unrest and Poqo activity peaked in Tembuland. Large numbers of people were arrested and accused of Poqo membership. Mobile police units were brought in to suppress disturbances.[87] Illegal and violent opposition to the authorities coincided with elections to a new Transkeian Legislative Assembly.[88] In Tembuland hostility to Matanzima was reflected in an almost total defeat at the polls for his candidates. But by 1964, Chief Matanzima had enhanced powers through his control of the Transkeian government (as a result of support of nominated members of the territorial assembly). Chiefs who had stood out against Bantu Authorities were being intimidated or induced to support them. A drought which lasted until 1969 forced another 35,000 Transkeians onto the labour market and killed a fifth of the territory's cattle serving further to demoralise popular resistance. In any case one

immediate provocation had been removed: the semi-autonomous Matanzima administration was thereafter to make no attempts to implement any stock limitation measures.[89]

Too little information is available to form definitive conclusions about the nature of the Tembu unrest. It is difficult to situate its constituents in the structure of their local society: it is unclear whether they were especially drawn from a particular economic stratum or were representative of a cross-section of the community. But it is likely that a precise fit between patterns of dissent and those of socio-economic distinction did not exist for the motive force underlying the disturbances was a perception of injustice, of rights which had been encroached upon as a consequence of a restructuring of local politics. The beneficiaries of the new order were a very small group indeed and by no means all of them were willing recruits.

A common feature with rural resistance elsewhere was the leading role played by migrant workers.[90] They brought to the Poqo movement their own organisational structures and their own socio-political preoccupations. These were not those of a developed proletarian consciousness for these men were not yet fully proletarianised: they were not completely 'free' of access to the means of production. Consciously they still felt that land rehabilitation measures were a threat to their livelihood. Though the men who set out from Cape Town to attack Matanzima would probably have been destined to spend most of their working lives in the Langa hostels, nevertheless they were going to kill Matanzima because he was taking away their land. It has been suggested that different experience of

oppression for the worker on the one hand, and his family in the reserve on the other, introduces 'a structural division in the heart of the proletariat'. The worker would focus his opposition on the relations of production in the towns, while rural people would attack chiefs and headmen.[91] But in the 1960s this was not the case; migrants, then, were not so detached from rural consciousness. Today things may be different: when people are forced off the land completely so that their entire subsistence depends on migrant wages, and when the migrant worker does not have the remotest prospect of ceasing to work in the towns and returning to his cattle and land, then perhaps he has become a member of an urban proletariat. In the early 1960s his situation was a transitional one.

It is in this context that his political reactions should be examined. At a time when the stay-away from work was the chief weapon of the nationalist movement, migrant workers hitherto had been considered apathetic politically, and the scale of their response to the Pan-Africanist Congress pass campaign in 1960 surprised witnesses in Cape Town. Here they were responding to the frustrations of urban conditions: low wages, influx control, separation from their families and police raids. They could also be concerned about agricultural conditions: drought, rain, cattle sickness and the state of the fields.[92]

In the Transkei, therefore, Poqo was a movement drawn from the social periphery of a developing capitalist economy and in terms of the concepts discussed at the beginning of this thesis it was populist. As such it had all the strengths and

weaknesses of a populist movement: an immensely powerful insurrectionary impulse but one very difficult to direct and organise from above. At its base the Poqo movement was a complex synthesis of, to use the Tilly's classifications, proactive and reactive movements, and it fed upon social networks which were themselves similarly complex. Populist movements are inevitably tragic, for they draw their energies from social orders under threats of dissolution and notwithstanding its brutality, Poqo was no exception to this.

Chapter Seven - Notes and References

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84. Ibid.

85. Ibid., 8 February 1963.

86. The Star, 6 February 1963.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

PAN AFRICANISTS IN EXILE, 1960-1976

This final chapter provides a sequel to the developments which form the subject of this dissertation. In examining the exile phase of the Pan-Africanists' history it will be concerned with their decline as an active force in South African politics. It will be argued in this chapter that the disintegration of the movement abroad was neither accidental nor simply an effect of the circumstances of exile, difficult as these were. It can be related as well to the organisation's original character which especially ill-equipped it for the rite of passage exile represents in the history of so many revolutionary movements in Africa.

This history was enacted during a period which for the most part within South Africa was politically at least, relatively tranquil. A tentative explanation for this is necessary. The most obvious reason was the suppression of the nationalist movements and the imprisonment, banning or exile of an entire generation of politicians and trade unionists. During the 1960s the police were granted unlimited powers of arrest and detention as well as increasingly lavish budgets. The police recruited an army of informers whose activities promoted a climate of fear and distrust, effectively paralysing any political initiative amongst Africans.[1] The decade also witnessed fresh restrictions on political discussions with the silencing of the radical press and the increasingly apolitical content of African commercial journalism.[2]

As well as legislation specifically intended to contain radical protest, other policies effectively served to curb any African political dissent. During the decade the government worked systematically to reverse the flow of African urbanisation and to restructure the industrial workforce into one composed principally of migrant labour. The process set in motion in the late 1950s in the western Cape was now enacted on a national scale. Over a million labour tenants and farm squatters and 400,000 city dwellers were resettled in the Bantustans, the population of which increased by 70 per cent in the 1960s. In addition, 327,000 people were brought directly under the control of the Bantustan authorities as a result of townships being incorporated within the boundaries of the reserves neighbouring them.[3] Nearly two-thirds of the country's African townships actually declined in size. Movement between the reserves and the towns was further controlled after 1968 with the completion of the rural labour bureaux system. As official regulation of people's lives became more and more severe so the prison population rose: by 1970 it was nearly twice what it had been in 1960 (outstripping an overall population growth of 25 per cent).[4] All these changes helped to break down existing networks of social solidarity and hamper the creation of new ones. They also contributed to the atmosphere of fear and insecurity which perpetuated political apathy.

Finally, and less importantly, the institutions of apartheid provided a limited degree of cooption. The administrative and political structures of the Bantustans

helped to accommodate the career aspirations of a section of the African petty bourgeoisie. The expansion of segregated educational facilities and the African white-collar employment generated by the 1960s may have helped to deflect well-educated Africans from political activism.

The environment of exile politics presented the Pan-Africanists with fresh problems and difficulties. These can be grouped in three categories: those arising from the need to maintain sanctuaries in foreign states and sources of external assistance; those related to efforts directed at the re-establishment of internal activity and support; and finally, the problem of holding the exile group together.[5] Before examining how the PAC exiles coped with these difficulties a few general points about each category can be made.

Under exile conditions one of the major functions of political leadership is diplomatic; at certain points in their history the support of foreign powers and international organisations was more crucial to the survival of South African political movements than the existence of active membership within the country. External help could involve certain obligations: taking sides in international great power hostilities, or even the internal political conflicts of the host state, were two of the more obvious of these. The requirements of diplomatic work and the habits created by it could serve to socially isolate leaders from rank and file. Liberation movement leaders were often encouraged by their hosts to behave in the manner of heads of states and members of government and this could help to fuel escapist illusions held

by the leaders concerning the strength and importance of the movements they represented. Foreign assistance could also be in the form of large financial donations providing a source of affluence well beyond the scope of the finances of the movements in the earlier phase of legal domestic activity. So first of all, even in the context of a friendly and sympathetic exile environment, there were threats to the long-term effectiveness of the political movements.

As far as the problem of reactivating an internal organisation was concerned, the exile movements were confronted with formidable barriers. In the 1960s and early 1970s South Africa was protected by a cordon sanitaire of colonial territories themselves engaged in extensive counter-insurgent operations. Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland, though all independent states by the end of 1968, were nevertheless too economically reliant on South Africa to provide secure bases for exile South African organisations (though the PAC attempted to base its guerrilla operations in Lesotho until 1965). South Africa does not provide the terrain or local conditions which allowed the establishment of successful guerrilla insurgencies in, for example, Mozambique or Angola. There, nationalist parties could initially base their struggles in superficially administered and economically fairly self-sufficient remote rural communities. In South Africa a repressive system of controls on popular mobility and political expression extends to the reserves where, for the most part, people live on the edge of starvation, dependent on migrant earnings. There is no group comparable to the 'middle peasantry' which comparative analyses of rural revolutions have found to be vital to the

successful guerrilla movement.[6] In the towns, influx control, and an extensive system of police informers served to inhibit political activity, as did the fear and demoralisation engendered by new security legislation and police powers. All these conditions helped to isolate exiled political leaders from the changing reality of life within the country, making it all the more difficult to devise realistic strategies.

Finally, the Pan-Africanists were vulnerable to behavioural tendencies arising from the circumstances of exile. In the absence of creative and rewarding mobilisation activity, political energy could focus itself around hairsplitting doctrinal disputes. Removed from the arena of real conflict, internal dissent and opposition to factions and personalities within the movement could serve as a substitute for externally-oriented aggression. Tensions between individual personalities could assume a reinforced significance and could be rationalised by both sides in ideological terms. The frustrations and material hardships of exile life (only a favoured few could live like diplomats) could promote escapist delusions, mutiny, and apathy amongst rank and file. The crucial need to engage in propaganda activity (and compete with other movements in making extravagant claims) so as to retain foreign support, could contribute to the intellectual sterility of exile politics. Large sums of money and an unaccustomed degree of power over rank and file members (usually the host state took the leaders' part in internal dissent) could present obvious temptations to men and women with experience of neither.

The Pan-Africanists in exile have had a turbulent history. By 1976, of their original fourteen-man executive committee,

at least eight were in exile. Of these six, Nana Mahomo, Peter Raboroko, Peter 'Molotsi, Jacob Nyaose, Z. B. Molete and Abednego Ngcobo, had been expelled from the organisation as a result of conflicts between them and the acting president, Potlake Leballo. In addition, at least two other men who had joined the leadership after PAC's ban, Matthew Nkoana and Tsepo Letlaka, were subsequently dismissed, Letlaka eventually becoming a member of the Transkeian government. Apart from leadership conflicts there have also been frequent internal rebellions resulting from the dissatisfaction of men in the guerrilla training camps. On several occasions these rebellions have taken the form of assassination attempts, the most recent being in 1979 when Leballo's successor, David Sibeko, was shot dead in Dar es Salaam. In its external relationships the PAC has had a disturbed history, incurring the wrath of the Organisation of African Unity in 1967 and 1968, and the Zambian government in 1968 and 1973; entering ill-starred alliances with the Frente Nacional de Libertacao de Angola (FNLA) in 1963 and the Comite Revolucionario de Mocambique (Coremo) in 1968; and attracting the dubious benefits of support from China and the Central Intelligence Agency. Its efforts to infiltrate its cadres back to South Africa were, in the pre-1976 period, even less fortunate than those of the ANC. For the Pan-Africanists, exile has been a traumatic and demoralising experience and through it the movement has been all but destroyed.

The following discussion of the PAC's history between 1960 and 1976 will have two dimensions. First, developments

at the level of leadership will be examined, that is, alterations and reformulations of policy, strategy, and ideology, disputes and conflicts, and the shifting and sometimes uneasy relationships that existed between the PAC and various foreign powers. Secondly, the situation of the movement's followers will be described; here the focus will be on conditions in the camps, rank-and-file reactions to leadership, and the attempts to return insurgents to South Africa.

Until late 1962 there was very little organised activity by PAC members in exile. Refugees from South Africa had clustered in Maseru and in various centres in Swaziland and Bechuanaland. In Europe and in different African capitals Nana Mahomo and Peter 'Molotsi, independently of any direction from their colleagues, attempted to counter the influence of the ANC and obtain promises of financial, diplomatic and military support. Only in August 1962, with the arrival of Potlake Leballo, was a formal exile leadership constituted. In a letter from Robert Sobukwe dated 25 August, Leballo was designated as acting president of the PAC, and national executive members - together with the chairman of the regional leaderships - were told to form a presidential council. The council was to have 'absolute power to rule, govern, direct and administer the PAC during the time the movement (was) banned and (during) the revolution'.[7] Maseru was, from 1962 to 1964, the headquarters of the organisation, though in the course of the following few months PAC representatives opened offices in London, Accra, Cairo, Francistown, Dar es Salaam and Leopoldville (Kinshasha). Later the PAC also sent men to Algiers and Lagos. Despite the theoretical consideration that

all these centres should be subject to the Maseru headquarter's authority, they tended to function independently and occasionally in rivalry with Maseru.

The period August 1962 to August 1964 represented a fairly distinct phase of the PAC's exile history, characterised by strategic ventures which would have been inconceivable in the case of an external leadership more remotely situated from South Africa. During the Maseru period the PAC's leadership remained ideologically and strategically fairly consistent to the movement's origin: statements by its representatives featured references to a vaguely conceived 'African personality', advocacy of an African socialism derived from a 'continuity from older tribal democracies to present-day forms', and xenophobia.[8] Its insurrectionary preoccupations flowed from the same presumptions about mass behaviour as did the 1960 anti-pass campaign: the principal shackles inhibiting popular resistance were psychological; 'show the light and the masses will find the way'.[9] The one innovation in its policies was the admission of a white man, Patrick Duncan, to membership. Patrick Duncan joined the PAC in April 1963, having left South Africa the year before in defiance of his banning order. At this stage the PAC still hoped for support from the non-communist powers and in this context Patrick Duncan, with his reputation and social connections abroad, could obviously perform a valuable role.[10]

Initially the Maseru leadership did not anticipate a lengthy exile. The original plan was for a massive uprising in which, on an appointed day, PAC cells all over South Africa would mount attacks on police stations and other strategic

targets to spark off a generalised insurrection. Preparations for this scheme began in late 1962, but were robbed of their crucial element of surprise on 27 March when Potlake Leballo staged a boisterous press conference in Maseru. Here he announced that the PAC's 155,000 members were impatiently awaiting his order to deliver the 'blow' which would end white South Africa.[11] On 1 April the Basutoland police visited the PAC office and questioned those whom they found there (Leballo had gone into hiding) and confiscated a quantity of documents, including membership lists. Shortly afterwards the South African police began arresting several thousand suspected PAC men, using, it was alleged, the documents supplied to them by the British colonial authorities. For several months the PAC headquarters in Maseru were closed down, only to re-open when Leballo resurfaced from his hiding in September 1963. Thereafter the PAC in Basutoland contented themselves with providing rudimentary instruction in guerrilla warfare.[12]

In the next year or so the major PAC initiatives took place in the fields of diplomacy and training. In June 1963 Nana Mahomo and Patrick Duncan (who had left Maseru for London in April) began a two-month tour of the United States, visiting trade unionists, United Nations officials, churchmen, senators, State Department officials and businessmen. Apart from fund-raising their main purpose was to persuade influential Americans in favour of an arms and oil embargo of South Africa. Patrick Duncan succeeded in talking to Robert Kennedy who listened sympathetically to a plan for a Basutoland-based South African insurgency.[13] Mahomo concentrated on the American labour

movement and was rewarded with a $5,000 donation from the AFL/CIO.[14] Mahomo's contacts with AFL/CIO officials provided the basis for rumours that the Pan-Africanists were being helped by the Central Intelligence Agency;[15] if this was the case then the CIA was being unusually miserly, for even by the standards of the time $5,000 was not an extravagant donation.

Nana Mahomo was responsible also for negotiating an agreement with the FNLA (another recipient of AFL/CIO generosity) through which PAC members would receive military training at the FNLA's Kinkuzu camp, near Leopoldville in the Congo. The incongruously named 'Operation Taperecorder' began in November 1963 with the arrival at Kinkuzu of a group of fourteen men from Dar es Salaam led by Nga Mamba Machema, a former PAC organiser in Langa. It was hoped that the South Africans, together with recruits from the South West African People's Organisation and Mozambican nationalists, would acquire practical experience from training and fighting alongside FNLA men against the Portuguese. In January the small PAC nucleus at Kinkuzu was augmented with a 'plane-load of completely untrained men from Francistown. By February the PAC force numbered about fifty men. Their strength, however, was rapidly dissipated. At the root of the trouble were the uncomfortable material conditions at Kinkuzu and the FNLA's ramshackle logistical system. In a letter written in April from one of the trainees to Abednego Ngcobo, then visiting Leopoldville, it was claimed that in the camp there was neither adequate food nor proper training facilities, that many of the trainees were

afflicted with fever and that eleven had already deserted.[16] The Angolan troops were hardly an inspiring example: by this stage the FNLA had few activists inside Angola, and the men in Kinkuzu stagnated - no attempt even was made to get them to grow their own food despite the abundance of fertile land around the camp. The PAC men would in any case have been hardly inclined to do so; most of the recruits were from Johannesburg with no knowledge of farming, and the local crops and diet had little appeal. Their behaviour rapidly deteriorated: those who did not desert resorted to factional conflicts. Mutinous sentiments apparently assumed an ethnic/regional dimension; the officers (the Dar es Salaam group) tended to be Xhosa-speakers from the Cape and the lower ranks (the Francistown group) mainly from Johannesburg.[17] The nature of the leadership of the PAC was also partly responsible for the failure of the Kinkuzu project. Whereas Mahomo was reported to be in charge of the Kinkuzu office in December 1963,[18] by January the next year he was back in London. The fact that no high-ranking PAC official was sent with the trainees to share their experiences was significant and typical: very few members of the Presidential Council ever underwent any form of training. Not surprisingly the Kinkuzu group felt they had been deceived and neglected. By May 1964 the remaining Kinkuzu trainees had been flown back to Dar es Salaam. Notwithstanding their experience, the PAC's links with the FNLA continued,[19] and in April 1971 a PAC group under the command of one Mashombe was said to be operating with FNLA forces independent of any control from PAC headquarters in Dar es Salaam.[20]

The PAC's negligence concerning its recruits in the Congo can be attributed partly to the first of a series of leadership disputes which were to plague the organisation. This one concerned the behaviour of the two external representatives who were appointed in March 1960, Mahomo and 'Molotsi. In January 1964 the Dar es Salaam office was riven by feuds which largely centred on the question of who should control the PAC's finances. 'Molotsi had represented the PAC in Dar es Salaam since 1960 and was responsible for initial negotiations with the OAU/ALC. Abednego Ngcobo, the PAC's treasurer, had no access to ALC or other African-derived funding which was banked into an account to which 'Molotsi was sole signatory. The problem had wider dimensions than simply a personal squabble between Ngcobo and 'Molotsi: there was considerable discontent among PAC men in Dar es Salaam. Some were destitute and several had recently been sent back to Bechuanaland by the Tanganyikan authorities. 'Molotsi's assistant, Gaur Radebe, was in prison, suspected of complicity in a military coup against Nyerere. The Maseru headquarters, alarmed by the reports of corruption and low morale (many PAC men were defecting to the ANC), authorised Patrick Duncan to find out exactly what was happening. Duncan's efforts, together with those of Ngcobo and Jacob Nyaose, to establish which funds had been received and how they were being used, ended up with the intervention of the Tanganyikan government, which froze 'Molotsi's bank account and withdrew his travel documents. 'Molotsi himself was suspended from office and control over funds was restored to Ngocobo.[21]

This incident led to the estrangement of Mahomo from other PAC leaders. As in the case of 'Molotsi, Mahomo was responsible

for negotiating much of the PAC's initial financial support and he too was unwilling to relinquish control of funds to the Maseru office. Mahomo was suspended in August 1964 charged with 'misappropriation of funds' and 'attempts to create personal loyalties' and 'sources of personal operation'.[22] In neither case was there any evidence of venality: Mahomo and 'Molotsi may have been simply motivated to maintain their own independent sphere of operation by the increasingly obvious reckless incompetence of Potlake Leballo and his colleagues. The AFL/CIO, incidentally, continued to provide funding for Mahomo's projects.

The PAC's problems were hardly resolved by the suspensions of Mahomo and 'Molotsi. Later in 1963 there were signs of a mounting wave of resentment and criticism of leadership in Francistown, Dar es Salaam and Maseru itself. In Francistown a rift had developed between one group of PAC refugees and another mainly as a result of the reluctance of some to undergo military training. They had left South Africa, they said, on the understanding that they would receive educational scholarships.[23] At the same time the local PAC representative in Francistown, Matthew Nkoana, with the support of 24 of the recruits, drew up a memorandum calling for a conference so that the command structure could be improved. This was rejected by Leballo in Maseru who claimed it represented a conspiracy aimed at his personal overthrow.[24] Leballo had good reason to feel personally threatened from within his organisation: in early 1964 PAC rebels blew up his house in Maseru; fortuitously, he was away at the time and escaped injury.[25] This took place shortly after Leballo had expelled nine of the Maseru-based group

so as to forestall a local rebellion against his authority. Unrest spread to the PAC forces in Dar es Salaam with the arrival of the men from Francistown who had refused to accept military training in Kinkuzu. In August 1964 Potlake Leballo finally left Maseru to re-establish the headquarters of the exile movement in its centre of patronage, Tanganyika. Here the mutinous recruits were informed that no scholarships were available and all would have to go on military training courses. They were subsequently despatched to Ghana where it appeared that the PAC had eclipsed the ANC in obtaining Nkrumah's favour.[26] Shortly before Leballo's arrival in Dar es Salaam, Abednego Ngcobo, Peter Raboroko and Ahmed Ebrahim (the PAC's first Indian member) began a tour of China.[27]

The PAC's effort to obtain Chinese support was not the result of an ideological reorientation of its leadership. Significantly, two of the three men who took part in the initial negotiations were later expelled for 'right-wing deviationism'. And while they were in China their colleagues continued to cultivate the friendship of American millionaires and U.S. State Department officials.[28] The fact was that the organisation was desperately short of money: of an estimated requirement of £148,000 the PAC received from the OAU and other sources less than £30,000.[29] The expedient character of the PAC's new pro-Chinese sentiment was confirmed by a rebuke from Nyaose in Dar es Salaam to Leballo in Maseru: 'Wherefore your articles attacking communism when in fact you (should) be attacking the diabolical activities of Joe Matthews and other fellow travellers . . . (you are) prejudicing our support at certain quarters'.[30] Notwithstanding such sophistry, the

Chinese 'alliance' was to have a profound effect on the organisation.

The following four years were exceptionally divisive ones for the PAC's leadership. Any analysis of the conflicts which arose in this period is complicated by a tendency by the protagonists to characterise any disagreement in polarised ideological terms. Of course, conflicts within the movement did have an ideological dimension - not all its members found the transition to Maoist rhetoric easy or acceptable - but tension really centred around the question of who controlled the movement and its resources rather than opposed principles held by contending factions. Ideology at times appeared to be more a matter of etiquette than a system of beliefs and values held by leaders and followers. By 1965, after the expulsion of PAC's remaining activists from Maseru (where amongst other things, they had attempted to organise the sabotage of the Cape to Johannesburg 'Blue Train'), most of the organisation's energies were devoted to internecine conflict. There is not the space here to document this in detail and a brief summary of the main events must suffice.

Most of 1965 and the first half of 1966 were relatively tranquil. Through the agency of Patrick Duncan, who had a rare attribute for a South African liberation movement representative - he spoke fluent French - the Pan-Africanists managed to obtain Algerian training facilities. Up to then the Algerians had tended to favour the ANC. Their training was considerably superior to that offered by the Angolans and Ghanaians, and for a time rank and file discontent appeared to subside.

(Duncan was soon relieved of his Algerian post; his political sympathies and social background were increasingly inappropriate to the mannerisms and conventions the PAC leadership was now trying to emulate.) Meanwhile his colleagues diverted themselves with squabbles over the control and expenditure of Egyptian and Chinese funding.[31] At a more creative level, the PAC adopted a new name for South Africa and broadened its potential appeal by admitting to its ranks former members of the Coloured People's Congress. The new name was 'Azania', a name favoured by early cartographers for part of eastern Africa and derived originally from an Arabic expression. Some PAC men were apparently uncertain of its progeny and Evelyn Waugh, who in his satirical novel Black Mischief, had called his mythical African country Azania, received a courteous letter of enquiry.[32] But whatever the inspiration for the name, the underlying motive for its adoption was a serious and important one - the desire to create an alternative cultural identity for black South Africans. Unfortunately for the PAC, this effort never really developed beyond the stage of symbolic gesture.

The defection of the CPC men to the PAC's ranks was a reflection of tensions which existed between SACP members and other exiles within the Congress movement in London. The PAC offered to non-communist CPC men what the ANC did not: full membership and responsibility in an African nationalist organisation, the PAC had always held in its policy statements that coloured people were African.[33] In fact the ex-CPC activists did not remain in the movement for long; by November 1967 they, together with other London-based PAC men, had

constituted themselves as a nucleus of 'real revolutionaries' within the movement, and were highly critical of most of the rest of the leadership.[34] By 1969 most had been ejected from the PAC after Potlake Leballo had become aware of their efforts to challenge his authority.

Most of the movement's internal tensions were kept below the surface until mid-1969. But in August that year, at an anti-apartheid conference in Brasilia, the two PAC representatives ostracised themselves from the rest of the Presidential Council by reading statements which called for some form of international intervention in South Africa. According to his critics Leballo had approved of these first[35] but they nevertheless conflicted in principle with the more self-sufficient strategy of an initially rural-based 'protracted peoples' war' now advocated by PAC ideologues in the training camps.[36] The two PAC men concerned lent weight to the accusations of CIA manipulation directed against them by subsequently embarking on a visit of the United States.[37] A meeting held under the auspices of the OAU/ALC did not improve matters, Raboroko arguing for a properly representative 'national convention' which would include 'right wing deviationists' and accusing Leballo of betraying the internal organisation in April 1963.[38] In July 1967 Ngcobo and Raboroko attempted to assume control of the Dar es Salaam office, and the ensuing scuffle was followed by the temporary closure of the office by the OAU/ALC. The two dissenters then held a press conference and called for an amnesty for all expelled and suspended members of the PAC. They were subsequently expelled for being 'on the pay roll of

US imperialism' and of conducting a slanderous campaign against Leballo's leadership 'with two small voices of evil cherubim'.[38] Ngcobo, as former PAC treasurer, was for good measure accused of embezzling US and European-derived funds. Ironically, shortly after these expulsions the demand for a reconciliatory meeting was partially acceded to. In a bid to isolate these latest critics, the PAC announced the annulment of all previous suspensions and expulsions and summoning of a leadership conference in Tanzania in September 1967.

The conference was held at Moshi. It was a small assembly, there was no attempt to make the conference proceedings representative of rank-and-file sentiment: the guerrilla units were represented by one member of the Presidential Council, T. M. Ntantala. In consequence it was not altogether surprising that despite the tone of 'rigorous but healthy self-criticism' which the PAC claimed predominated at Moshi, the conference mainly served to endorse the actions and behaviour of the PAC leadership. The expulsions of Ngcobo and Raboroko were confirmed and an anti-corruption committee chaired by Potlake Leballo was instituted to investigate allegations of misbehaviour by other senior PAC members. On the premise that 'the masses are ready for a long revolutionary war' the Presidential Council was replaced by a 'Revolutionary Command' under the authority of Potlake Leballo which established its headquarters in Lusaka in December 1967 in the hope that Zambia would provide a base for infiltration into hostile territory. It was admitted that hitherto the PAC had devoted a disproportionate effort to 'aimless international diplomacy' and that henceforth the main

emphasis of its work would be on re-establishing its link with the internal struggle.[40]

The transfer of the headquarters to Zambia and the promise of greater activism in the future reflected the increasing impatience with which the PAC was being regarded by African statesmen. Later in 1967 an OAU meeting in Kinshasha called upon the PAC to justify its continued existence and in February the following year at a council of ministers' meeting in Addis Ababa the movement was presented with an ultimatum: if the PAC did not mount any infiltration efforts by June all OAU aid would cease. To avert this catastrophe twelve men were selected from the group which had established a training camp at Senkobo near Lusaka. In April 1968 they were transported to the Mozambican border in Zambian government Land Rovers. Just before they crossed the border their weapons, which had previously been confiscated by the Zambian authorities, were restored to them. The intention was that the PAC men would cross Mozambique with the guidance of Coremo guerrillas and enter South Africa. In return Coremo would receive their help in sabotaging the Beira oil pipeline to Rhodesia and would receive weapons (without OAU recognition Coremo received very little external assistance). The PAC/Coremo group survived in Mozambique for nearly two months but were finally intercepted at Villa Piri at the beginning of June. Most of the PAC men were captured or killed. The Portuguese subsequently handed their prisoners over to the South African police. Two managed to evade capture and return to Zambia.[41]

The failure of the Mozambique expedition increased rank-and-file disenchantment with the Revolutionary Command. With

the return of the two survivors of the expedition rumours that the guerrillas had been betrayed by the Zambian government and the Lusaka-based leadership began to circulate in the Senkobo base. At this stage, hoping to capitalise on lower echelon disaffection, Leballo's opponents, led by Tsepo Letlaka, first held a meeting in Dar es Salaam and announced the expulsion from the PAC of Leballo and his supporters and then travelled to Zambia. Letlaka, accompanied by Ngcobo, Motlete, Nyaose and Raboroko visited the Senkobo camp with the hope of obtaining the guerrilla's support. Instead they were arrested and locked up. At this point the Zambian government intervened, raiding and closing down the PAC office in Lusaka, rounding up all the PAC members on Zambian territory regardless of their loyalties, and returned them to Tanzania. The Zambians then imposed a ban on any PAC activity, claiming that the Pan-Africanists had been involved in an attempt to overthrow the Kaunda administration. In Tanzania the dissidents were housed in a separate camp and most of them eventually made their way to Kenya. The OAU/ALC resolved to deny the PAC any further assistance until it put its internal affairs into order.[42]

What was the significance of all this? The dominant group within the PAC normally characterised such conflicts in grandiose historical terms, the Leballo faction being identified with 'the revolution' or 'the masses' and its enemies with 'imperialism' and 'counter-revolution' and so forth. The dissenters would attribute the organisation's troubles not to external interference but instead to the individual shortcomings of leading personalities within the movement. Both points of view had some justification. Some of Leballo's opponents did

appear to have CIA connections. At the same time Leballo's behaviour could be vain, autocratic, self-centred and ill-considered. But neither external subversion nor personal deficiencies provide a satisfactory explanation of the PAC weaknesses. The PAC was especially susceptible to corruption as a result of manipulation and personal failings, and the reasons for this can be traced by to the movement's essential character.

Three features of the PAC's development made it particularly vulnerable. First, its original ideological cohesion was based on the antipathy of its founders to external influences on the African National Congress. In particular they were hostile to the framework of multiracial alliances, within which the ANC conducted its affairs in the 1950s. For most Africanists this was the predominant consideration. 'African nationalism' on the whole remained a fairly abstract conception; the Africanists had only the vaguest conception of what their social ideal should be. In other words, their main basis for unity was essentially negative. In exile the issue of multiracialism was parochial and increasingly irrelevant. The PAC's previous hostility to 'foreign ideologies' made it especially ill-equipped intellectually to respond to the fresh challenges of a foreign environment. Casting around for new sources of support and inspiration, its leaders oscillated wildly between different international political camps. In place of any analysis and discussion there was substituted a sterile and externally derived dogmatism - for example, in a policy document of 1972, one finds the PAC advocating a rurally based popular insurgency

aimed first of all at abolishing 'feudal relations in the countryside'.[43] In such circumstances the movement quickly shed its intellectual integrity.

The second source of weakness was the traditional indifference of most PAC men to the problems of effective organisation. In South Africa their dependence on notions of mass spontaneity and the concept of a charismatic leadership meant that they did not devote much energy to the task of transforming their movement into a carefully structured mass organisation. In exile this neglect led to bureaucratic chaos, and in the absence of well-defined democratic decision-making procedures, an increasing degree of authoritarianism. In such circumstances personal rivalries could have an especially debilitating effect.

Finally, in sociological terms the PAC's leaders often came from less privileged backgrounds than, for example, their compatriots in the ANC. They were thus more susceptible to the temptations, pretensions, and delusions of exile politics. The melodrama, hysteria, and grandiloquence inherent in their behaviour was probably a reflection of anxiety about status as well as an attempt to compensate for the insecurity and obscurity of existence in an alien environment. In this context it should be remembered that in many places the PAC did not have the institutional respectability of its rival.

A second meeting of Moshi of those who remained loyal to Potlake Leballo (whose numbers were rapidly diminishing - there were a spate of desertions in late 1968)[44] confirmed the expulsion of five conspirators and once again reaffirmed the

'revolutionary leadership' of Leballo. Somehow the PAC managed to restore its position with the OAU/ALC, being granted recognition once again in early 1969. Because of continued Zambian intransigence there were to be no further infiltration attempts for several years. While the PAC guerrillas were confined in the Zimbabwe African National Union's training camp and did nothing (there were no weapons for them to train with),[45] Leballo busied himself with political intrigue in Dar es Salaam. In 1969 a group of leading Tanganyika African National Union politicians, whose business interests had led them to oppose Nyerere's Arusha declaration, plotted the overthrow of the government. Without access to the military they planned instead to draw upon the resources of the liberation movements encamped in Tanzania and for this purpose tried to recruit the PAC's Azanian Peoples' Liberation Army (APLA) (as it was known from 1968). The former ALC chairman, Oscar Kambona, then in exile, promised that in return for their cooperation, in the event of a successful coup, the PAC would receive lavish funding and facilities. Leballo, according to the prosecution in the later trial, informed the Tanzanian authorities and was encouraged to maintain contact with the conspirators so as to elicit more information. In 1970 the PAC acting president was the key prosecution witness in a lengthy treason trial.[46] From then onwards, Leballo could depend on the Tanzanian government's support in suppressing any resistance to his authority. The first sign of its approval was the inclusion of APLA men in a training programme being run from late 1970 by Chinese instructors at Chunya.[47]

Any chance that the APLA guerrillas would be able to use their newly learnt skills appeared to recede still further in early 1971, when the Basuto Congress Party (the probable victors of Lesotho's 1970 election), dropped their connection with the PAC in the aftermath of a coup d'etat by the incumbent administration. A rump group of the BCP was then offered a place in the post-coup administration if it ended any links between the BCP and South African liberation movements. Confronted with an increasingly hostile administration, the few remaining PAC members in Lesotho travelled north to Dar es Salaam.

From 1971 to 1975 the PAC made various attempts to negotiate a route back to South Africa for its guerrillas. From 1971 to 1973 the Zambians relented, allowing PAC men into the country for brief periods so they could then arrange their passage through Botswana. In November 1972 talks began with SWAPO representatives in the hope that SWAPO could be persuaded to guide APLA units through the Caprivi Strip into Botswana. The SWAPO people were unenthusiastic and eventually the PAC turned to the Uniao Nacional para Independencia Total de Angola (UNITA) for a similar arrangement. After the arrest of a PAC member for assault, the PAC was again excluded from Zambia.

By late 1973 the APLA guerrillas had been in the Chunya camp for four years, their boredom and sense of isolation relieved only by occasional training sessions, drill exercises, the political education classes. Their mood was becoming increasingly rebellious and appeared to affect some of Leballo's colleagues.[47] Once again the situation was saved by external

circumstances. A renewed spate of diplomatic activity had resulted in the development of fresh sources of patronage. In November 1974 PAC lobbyists succeeded in obtaining the expulsion of South Africa from the United Nations General Assembly[49] and in July 1975 the OAU Kampala meeting adopted as official policy a long document prepared by the PAC arguing the case for the illegality of South Africa's international status.[50] Subsequently, both Uganda and Libya offered facilities. Libyan training helped to defuse some of the tension which had developed at Chunya, and 100 APLA men were flown to Libya.[51]

Frelimo's accession to power in June 1975 opened up fresh opportunities for infiltration. The PAC had had a poor relationship with the new rulers of Mozambique but Frelimo was nevertheless prepared to tolerate the passage of Pan-Africanists through their country to Swaziland. It was here that the PAC mounted its first sustained insurgent effort since 1963.

Between September 1975 and May 1976 a small group of guerrillas from Chunya ran a programme of military and political instruction for dissident members of the Mgomezulu tribe. The Mgomezulu straddle the South African-Swazi border and from 1970 had been politically divided by a chieftancy succession dispute, which had developed into intermittent fighting between factions supporting the two opposed claimants. Ntunja, the chief who had been appointed on the death of Mbikiza, was deposed by the South African and Kwa Zulu authorities in early 1974 and in his place Khatwayo, the rival claimant, was installed. Khatwayo's chieftancy began with fighting between his supporters and those of Ntunja. With the help of the South African police, Ntunja's

faction was driven off their lands, and fled into Swaziland with their chief. Here they came into contact with PAC representatives who saw in the dissident Mgomezulu faction the potential social base for a rural guerrilla movement. The Mgomezulu were receptive to any offers of help, whatever motives underlay them. With only three old .303 rifles and a shotgun between them they were anxious to acquire weapons and expertise in using them. They were aware that Pan-Africanists were concerned with a rather wider conflict than their disputed chieftancy but their own political motivation remained locally orientated.

In October 1975 three men from Chunya who had travelled from Dar es Salaam by aeroplane and bus to Swaziland began training about thirty Mgomezulus. They started with basic lessons on firearms, naming the parts of the .303 rifles and showing them how to aim and sight the weapon. They were unable to begin target practice as the consequent explosions would have attracted the Swazi police. The training sessions were conducted at Mkalampere, a disputed area on the South Africa-Swazi border. After a month the PAC men were able to obtain a couple of air rifles which they could allow their new recruits to fire. Training was suspended for six weeks over December 1975 and January 1976 because of the presence in the area of South Africa soldiers, but was resumed with their departure. Meanwhile PAC officials made several fruitless attempts to persuade President Machel of Mozambique to allow the transit of arms and reinforcements through Mozambique. Machel refused: it was known that a small group of PAC men were with UNITA in Southern Angola, and quite apart from UNITA's hostility to

Frelimo's ally the MPLA, UNITA also appeared to have formed an alliance with the South African army. The OAU/ALC was reluctant to give the PAC any weaponry unless it could obtain the agreement of the Zambian and Mozambique authorities to ferry military equipment through their territories. Unable to supply the new followers with weapons, the PAC headquarters instead sent them some approved literature: speeches by Potlake Leballo and Mao's writings on guerrilla warfare. The instructors were told to investigate suitable routes and hiding places but to do nothing until the arrival of arms and further instructions. In April the Swazi police arrested some of the Mgomezulus, whom they had discovered in possession of home-made weapons. Then in early May South African police arrested the three PAC instructors at Mkalampere. With these arrests the PAC lost interest in the affairs of the supporters of Ntunja.[52]

The eve of the Soweto uprising found the PAC weak and once again divided. In Libya the guerrillas had revolted against the stringent code of behaviour imposed by their Islamic instructors and had had to be transferred to Uganda. Money promised by China had failed to arrive (after the defeat of its clients in Angola the Chinese lost interest in Southern Africa) and the OAU was being uncooperative. The most telling factor against the PAC was the system of alliances it had contracted: in the light of the Frelimo and MPLA victories the PAC's former connections with UNITA, the FNLA, and Coremo were extremely unhelpful. This, together with its failure to implement seriously any internal organisational reforms and the continuing rift between leadership and rank and file, was to inhibit its efforts to exploit the changed circumstances of the late 1970s.

This discussion of the PAC would be incomplete without some reference to the situation of the men in the training camps who represented the bulk of the exile movement. In examining their plight the tragic dimension of the PAC's history abroad becomes clearer. For many of them had spent well over a decade in various rural army bases in different African countries. The case of Isaac Mhlekwa, one of the men who worked with the Mgomezulu people, was fairly typical. Mhlekwa had joined the PAC in 1959 while working as a petrol pump attendant in Cape Town. Returning to his family in the Transkei in 1960 to get married he did not participate in the PAC's pass campaign in Cape Town. From 1960 to 1964 he was not politically active but in early 1964 he was visited at his hostel in Langa by the man who had recruited him in 1960. He was told to leave the country and report to the PAC in Francistown for military training. From February to August he stayed with other PAC recruits in Francistown waiting for transport northwards. In August a lorry came from Lusaka to fetch them. After two months of hanging around Lusaka he and his fellow recruits were sent to the Ngulana refugee camp in Tanzania. Then in late 1964 the PAC men at Ngulana were flown to Ghana for their initial military education. The Ghanaian training was poor: the men were given conventional military drill by Ghanaian army officers and were badly clothed and fed. At the end of January 1965, after a revolt in the camp at Kumasi, the PAC men were transferred to Algeria. Here the training programme was considerably more sophisticated and the men's material needs more adequately provided for. After going on an officer's training course, Mhlekwa fell ill with tuberculosis and spent five months in

hospital in Algiers. On his release from hospital in September 1965 he rejoined his comrades who were now at Mbeya in Tanzania. For ten months their military training lapsed as the PAC had no weapons for them. Instead the recruits occupied themselves with reading texts by Marx, Mao and Lenin and keeping fit with physical exercise. In October 1966 Mhlekwa was transferred to another camp, Ruanda, and was instructed in the use of weapons. Five months later he attended a further training session at Morogoro and was then - in June 1967 - sent to the Zambian base camp. Mhlekwa spent over a year in Zambia, mainly working in the Lusaka PAC office and being treated for tuberculosis. He was deported in August 1968 with the other PAC members and spent the subsequent years either in Chunya camp or receiving treatment of TB at Mbeya. Most of the people who had been trained with him remained in Chunya.

Underlying the frequent desertions, minor revolts over food and conditions, and the more occasional full-scale mutinies which characterised the history of the camps, was the boredom and obvious futility of the daily existence of the training camp inmates. Because of their refugee status it was difficult for them to take up any form of local employment. There were no attempts to make the camps self-sufficient for their food supplies. What passed for political education comprised uncritical repetition of Maoist catch-phrases: if their public documents can form the basis of an accurate judgement, the PAC's strategic discussions were conducted within a realm of total fantasy.

Chapter Eight - Notes and References

1. Philip Frankel, 'South Africa: the politics of police control', Comparative Politics, xii, 4 (July 1980), pp. 484-5.

2. New Age was proscribed in 1962 and shortly afterwards Contact and The Torch ran into financial difficulties and ceased publication. After 1961 Drum's editorial policy became increasingly subject to commercial considerations, as did that of the tabloid Golden City Post, both becoming oriented to crime, sport and human interest reportage. Ownership changes also brought The World into line with the prevalent intellectually lightweight tone of African journalism. However, the transformation of both The World and Post into dailies with Sunday editions once again, by the end of the decade, opened up African newspapers to political dissent. The vernacular press had a very limited readership in Johannesburg.

3. Alan Baldwin, 'Mass removals and separate development', Journal of Southern African Studies, i, 1 (1974), pp. 215-27.

4. John Kane-Berman, Soweto: black revolt, white reaction, Ravan, Johannesburg, 1978, p. 83.

5. These generalisations about the conditions provided by the exile environment are drawn mainly from John Marcom 'Exile condition and revolutionary effectiveness' in C. P. Potholm and R. Dale, Southern Africa in Perspective. Free Press: New York, 1973.

6. See Eric Wolf, Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century, Faber: London, 1969, pp. 291-3.

7. 'Background to official appointments and policy statement', memorandum signed by Potlake Leballo and John Pokela, Maseru, 20 June 1964.

8. Joe Molefi, 'Approach to African Socialism', New African, London, i, 12, December 1962, and Elias Ntloedibe, 'Race and nationhood', New African, i, 9, September 1962.

9. See Chapter 2.

10. The circumstances surrounding Duncan's recruitment are discussed in C. J. Driver, Patrick Duncan: South African and Pan-African, Heinemann, London 1980, pp. 221-4.

11. Contact, Cape Town, 5 April 1963, p. 6.

12. See trial reports in Contact, April 1965, July 1966 and October 1966. The activities of the Maseru leaders after 1963 are discussed more fully in Chapter 4.

13. C. J. Driver, Patrick Duncan, p. 229.

14. Details of this donation are provided in a letter from the PAC headquarters to the PAC treasurer, A. B. Ngcobo, dated 3 March 1964. See also Matthew Nkoana, Crisis in the Revolution, Mafube Publications, London, 1968, Capter 3.

15. The AFL/CIO's external programme was believed to serve as a conduit for CIA funding. The PAC leadership implied that Mahomo was working with CIA agents in 'Official statement of expulsion and repudiation of the call for United Nations intervention', PAC headquarters, Lusaka, 1967, p. 6. Mahomo, it should be said, continues to vigorously deny such charges (Nana Mahomo, interviewed by Bob Edgar, Washington, 1983).

16. Letter from recruit at Kinkuzu base at A. B. Ngcobo in Leopoldville, dated April 1964.

17. John Marcum, The Angolan Revolution, Volume 2, The MIT Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1978, p. 118.

18. Africa Confidential, London, December 1963.

19. See report of Potlake Leballo's visit to Kinshasha in supplement to Le Progres, Kinshasha, 2 April 1967. Cited in Marcum, 'The exile condition and revolutionary effectiveness', Potholm and Dale (ed.), Southern Africa in Perspective, p. 384.

20. Africa Confidential, London, April 1971.

21. Driver, Patrick Duncan, pp. 235-6.

22. 'Instrument of suspension from office', Potalke Leballo to Mahomo, Maseru, 10 August 1964.

23. State vs. Stanley Thabo Pule and two others, Supreme Court Natal Division, Case No. ec 133/77, trial records.

24. Open letter from Matthew Nkoana to Potlake Leballo, London, 2 December 1966, p. 6.

25. See report entitled 'Exiles in terrorist activities' in South Africa: Information and Analysis, Congress for Cultural Freedom, Paris, no. 25, June 1964.

26. The PAC's espousal of Nkrumah's Pan-Africanism helped in their relationship with the Ghanaian authorities. In March, Jacob Nyaose was claiming that Nkrumah was displeased with the local ANC representatives; by mid-1964 the Ghanaians were providing funding as well as training and in August Nkrumah announced in Cairo that his government would only in future support one liberation movement from each country. Sources:

letter from Jacob Nyaose to Maseru headquarters, 30 March 1964; undated memorandum from Dar es Salaam to Maseru (mid-1964); Report from Dar es Salaam to Maseru, 14 August 1964.

27. Report from Dar es Salaam to Maseru, 14 August 1964.

28. Ibid.

29. Pan-Africanist Congress, Dar es Salaam office, financial statement, 31 October 1963 to 31 May 1964.

30. Undated letter from Jacob Nyaose, Dar es Salaam to Maseru headquarters (May 1964).

31. Matthew Nkoana, Crisis in Revolution, Chapter 4.

32. Driver, Patrick Duncan, p. 244.

33. For a detailed if partisan analysis of the tensions which led to the defection of the Coloured People's Congress members from the ANC see Cardiff Marney, "The Struggle for Unity in Azania" in Pan-Africanist Congress, Department of Information, New Phase in The Azanian Struggle, Lusaka, 1966, pp. 27-60.

34. University of York, Centre for Southern African Studies (UY-CSAS), Lionel Morrison Papers, Memorandum of meeting to discuss 'revolutionary nucleus', 12 November 1967.

35. Matthew Nkoana to Potlake Leballo, London, 2 December 1966, p. 8.

36. State vs. Stanley Thabo Pule and two others, trial records.

37. Pan-Africanist Congress, 'Official statement of expulsion and repudiation of the call for United Nations intervention', p. 4.

38. UY-CSAS, Patrick Duncan Papers, Report of a joint meeting between OAU/ALC and Pan-Africanists officials, 6 April 1967.

39. Pan-Africanist Congress, 'Official statement of expulsion . .', p. 3.

40. Pan-Africanist Congress, Press statement on Moshi Conference, September 1967, signed by Barney Desai, Lusaka, 29 September 1967.

41. Information on the PAC/Coremo expedition derived from Michael Morris, Southern African Terrorism and State vs. Stanley Thabo Pule and two others, trial records.

42. The episode is described in Morris, Southern African Terrorism and in much greater detail in the trial records of State vs. Stanley Thabo Pule and two others.

43. Pan-Africanist Congress, Principles of a United Front in a People's War, London, 1972, p. 17.

44. State vs. Stanley Thabo Pule and two others, trial records.

45. Ibid.

46. This was the trial of Oscar Kambona who was accused and convicted in absentia.

47. State vs. Stanley Thabo Pule and two others, trial records.

48. In December 1973 two members of the Revolutionary Command, P. Gqobose (recently arrived from Lesotho) and Z. P. Moboko, visited Chunya camp and discussed with APLA soldiers the possibility of Leballo's expulsion if an infiltration programme was not launched.

49. Azania Combat, London, 1, 1975, p. 7.

50. Pan-Africanist Congress, The Status of the Bogus Republic of South Africa, London, 1975.

51. State vs. Stanley Thabo Pule and others, trial records.

52. Ibid.

CONCLUSION

The literature concerning the development of African political organisations in South Africa has been informed mainly by the perceptions, experiences and characteristics of their leaders rather than their followers. It has been a literature which in its analysis of African opposition and resistance to government policies has largely confined itself to the examination of formal organisational structures: committees, hierarchies, parties, congresses, conferences, federations, and alliances. Much of what has been written has focussed on the chronology of institutions, ideas or particular individuals.

So, for example, the monumental documentary collections edited by Thomas Karis and Gwendoline Carter, narrate both through the documents themselves as well as the painstaking scholarly introductions the evolution of the principal African political organisations which existed up to 1965, the African National Congress, the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union, the All African Convention, the Pan-Africanist Congress and other more ephemeral bodies. The changing beliefs of their leaderships, the shifting heritage of ideas which coloured their intentions and strategies, their bureaucratic structures, their finances and membership statistics, the discussions which preceded and produced their programmes and which defined their campaigning, all these are minutely detailed with the aid of correspondence, internal memoranda, bulletins, conference reports, memoirs, and, sometimes crucially, the oral reminiscences and opinions of surviving notables and activists. Karis and

Carter's work as well as that of their proteges in assembling this massive survey represents an historiographical epic of heroic proportions: they have laid much of the essential groundwork for the study of African nationalism in South Africa for many years to come.[1]

Yet notwithstanding the care and attention to detail of their work, their methodology with its emphasis on organisations which are intellectually articulate through either internal documentation or the oral statements of sophisticated and educated participants, has certain shortcomings. In common with most other commentaries on African protest and resistance their record is silent on one of the most dramatic resistance movements which involved black South Africans during their chosen period: the struggle of rural black people against the imposition of Bantu Authorities and land 'rehabilitation' in the reserves. This only occasionally and tangentially involved the African National Congress (it was more central to the preoccupations of the tiny Cape-based All African Convention) and it produced little in the way of documentation for its principal actors were often men who could neither write nor read. But even in the case of the organisations which Karis and Carter choose to concentrate upon, they allow themselves to be guided by their informants' views and the documentary suggestions of what was apparently of significance and what could be relegated as being of minor importance. So, for example, the efforts of women to resist the issue of reference books, one of the most prolonged, widespread, energetic, as well as one of the most successful resistance movements[2] which involved the ANC during the 1950s, rates two pages and one document in their eight hundred page

long third volume. It was not, after all, a movement which aroused much enthusiasm from the (predominantly male) Congress leadership.[3] Similarly, and more centrally to the concerns of this thesis, Gail Gerhart, both in the section she prepared for the Karis and Carter volume, and in her own treatment of black 'exclusivist' political bodies, skates hurriedly over sketchy evidence in her brief discussion of Pogo, depending chiefly on the perceptions of outsiders, before returning to the world of respectable resistance with its educated men and their eloquent testimony. Pogo in her analysis of the development of an Africanist tradition[4] is merely a brutal and tragic sideshow, a brief and disreputable interlude in the evolution of an ordered and logically coherent intellectual system.

It might be objected that if one's primary interest is in great men and their thoughts this neglect of movements which lie outside their domain is perfectly justifiable. Such an objection could be sustained if the purpose of works such as these was only to chart the progression of ideas. But the organisations and their personnel are viewed as actors of fundamental social significance, capable of stimulating and provoking large-scale popular responses and in their development are seen vital elements which will help to shape South Africa's future destiny. If such a view is valid then political historians need to explain not only the gestation of ideas but also the reasons for their relative impact on the behaviour of large masses of ordinary people. Here conference agenda, newsletters, presidential addresses, annual reports and statements from the dock are of very limited utility.

Of course a way out of this difficulty is to begin one's

enquiry with the assumption that in examining movements like the ANC or PAC and the social upheavals which accompany them the subject of the analysis is a sociological abnormality, a pathological condition, the study of which might suggest social remedies and reforms. An example of the operation of such assumptions can be found in the work of Edward Feit, who next to Karis and Carter, has made one of the most substantial contributions to the study of black politics in South Africa.[5] Significantly, while Karis and Carter are predisposed to the evidence of the conference hall, Feit's preference is for the facts established in the court-room. In Feit's view, the actions of a revolutionary and violent minority are the actions of a pathological and unrepresentative few attempting to disrupt the stable and normally ordered lives of the many. The activities and motives of the insurgents can be explained with reference to the frustrations and aspirations of a socially confined African bourgeoisie and the frequent popular apathy which they encountered can best be attributed to the state's capacity for providing the framework for an acceptable existence for the great mass of urban black people:

> Stability . . . (is) attained not only by repression but also by the maintenance of order and by economic improvement, some of which, at least, spills over to the black people . . . to succeed the African insurgents would have to maintain an increasing rate of disorder, beyond a level which the government could control. 6

> Most 'little' people are not much concerned with 'big' issues . . . The people like the jungle are neutral. They will side with whoever can best protect them. Protection means order. Disorder makes life difficult. Order is, therefore, the crucial issue. 7

Therefore for Feit, the main thing to explain is why organisations like the ANC do not have the capacity to create significant disorder. The problem is defined as an essentially bureaucratic one and the analysis is almost tautologous: African organisations are ineffective because they are inefficient. Part of their inefficiency can be traced to the hysterical psychology of their leadership. Many of the prevalent assumptions of Feit's work seem to flow from the theories of social breakdown referred to in Chapter Four. From the perspective of such an analysis movements like Pogo are the responses of the socially marginalised, interesting no doubt, but not in the mainstream of proper historical concern. While Karis and Carter have little to say about the constituencies of African political protest they do assume them to have a popular character. For Feit they do not exist at a popular level at all - ordinary people are immune from notions of injustice or the desire to participate in the decisions which govern the nature of their lives.

The third perspective offered by scholarly literautre on black South African opposition is the one offered by Marxists in which the role and character of political organisations is determined by their location in the arena of class struggle. The South African Marxist 'revisionist' school perceives the history of the 1950s as being primarily determined by the needs and requirements of a maturing monopoly capital and the efforts of the working class to confront this capital.[8] The ANC's significance in this context is estimated by the extent to which it incorporated a developed industrial proletariat in its ranks and the measure to which such a group had their interests and

concerns reflected by the ANC's leadership. Within this school there is a general consensus that the ANC was based on a working class membership though there is considerable disagreement as to whether the ANC's leaders shared this proletarian ethos.[9] Not surprisingly, the PAC and Pogo does not have much attention paid to it in this historiography, for not only were their leaders hostile to class-based attempts at popular mobilisation, but the concerns of their followers seem to have had little to do with the essentials of the conflict between capital and labour.

From this survey it is easy to understand the scholarly neglect of the Pogo insurrection. Yet the examination of the Pogo movement does more than simply filling a gap in existing historical research. The study of Pogo contained in this thesis offers several insights which may be useful for future more general analyses of black South African politics.

First, the dominant concern of this thesis has been with followers rather than leaders, with the precise identification of the PAC's popular constituents and the factors which influenced their political involvement. Examining the PAC and Pogo 'from below' has required the collection of information about local conditions in a variety of locations and the situating of the PAC within the context of local societies the complexities of which are often very difficult for an external observer to understand. Such a task involves rather a wider range of sources than have been used in the authorities discussed above. Municipal records, local newspapers, anthropological and sociological surveys, and evidence to government commissions - such

sources help to lend colour and substance to the historical reconstruction of the base of a political movement in a way that party documents do not. Of course interviews with participants help but the information gleaned from rank and filers can often tell us as much as the memories of leaders (who are often more concerned than the former about setting the record for posterity). Trial records are another important source which do feature quite prominently in the sources of existing scholarship as well as in this work. But trial records can be used in at least two fashions: to illuminate the nature, sequence, motive and character of particular political acts (usually the concern of the court) and to disclose information about the participants in such acts, information which may have no immediate bearing on the acts themselves but which may help us to socially identify the actors. In this study in contrast to others the second sort of information derived from trial reports has been at least as highly valued as the first. The vantage point from which this study has examined Pogo could also be employed in the cases of other movements and organisations. It is possible that conclusions which can be drawn from the PAC/Pogo experience may be found to have a wider applicability. What, then, are these conclusions?

First of all the Pan-Africanist Congress was not a body which can be understood solely in terms of criteria derived from the study of formal organisations. Its leadership was a sect, for a long time, a conspiritorial one, an intellectual tendency within a larger organisation. Almost fortuitously its influence was for a brief time to inspire a social movement - or

rather several social movements - the youthful rebellion of the schools of the Eastern Cape and Pretoria, the migrant workers who were attempting to establish a secure existence in the towns of the Western Province, the struggle of Transkeien peasants to resist proletarianisation. In such different social settings the ideas of the original sect resounded differently with varying implications, interpreted according to particular needs and expectations. Variations in location and situation of its following also involved variations in its historical character. In certain contexts the PAC/Pogo was a movement of the future aimed at the capture of the state and the creation of a differently structured society, in others it was a movement hostile to the state and oriented to the recapture of the smaller society of the past; in terms suggested by the Tillies' analysis, it was simultaneously a reactive and a proactive movement.

Then it is possible to witness in the location-based study of movements like the PAC/Pogo the extent to which such movements were central to the lives of ordinary people and the degree to which they were popularly understood as legitimate. Certainly the evidence derived from the Western Cape and Transkeien case studies would negate the view that this was a movement of the social fringe. It is also possible, as is suggested by the material from East London and Pretoria, that even small political groups can represent a distillation of a more generalised anger at social injustice.

The PAC was a popular movement but the popular forces it succeeded in marshalling were not proletarian in character. Its followers were, it is true, literally speaking workers, but they

did not in their political responses manifest a consciousness of themselves as members of an industrial working class. The motives of migrant workers who joined Pogo draw attention to the importance of a residual rural ideology amongst urban migrant workers in a context in which many had emotional and in some instances material links with the countryside. This did not, as is sometimes supposed, inhibit their participation in urban-located political dramas, but it was a participation on their terms and it shaped such dramas accordingly. It should be remembered that in the period discussed in this thesis migrant workers made up the substantial proportion of those Africans engaged in heavy industry: to look elsewhere for the springs of an authentic working class politics at that time would be to ignore social and political realities. The evidence of the chapters which are centred on the society of migrant workers (in Cape Town, Paarl and the Transkei) as well as those which are not (the chapters set in Vereeniging, Soweto, Port Elizabeth, East London and Pretoria) would seem to indicate that the search for the political expression of a working class for itself (in the Marxist sense) in the history of the struggles of the 1950s and 1960s is an unrewarding exercise. To a very large measure at that time working class politics in South Africa was populist politics.

The concept of a 'working class consciousness' may be too abstract altogether for the analysis of South African politics. Popular classes or groups in such a society reflect a patchwork of social identities. They contribute important functions to the working of that society but ideologically they are remote from it. The ruling class dominates not through ideas but rather

by force. In such circumstances the dominated classes are unlikely to produce a neat proletarian antithesis to a bourgeois ideology. The ultimate historical significance of the PAC may be that the social presumptions which underlay its populist rhetoric were correct. South African racial oppression may ultimately have a class-derived logic but there is even less reason than in most societies for politics to assume pure class-determined forms. This in addition to the fact that in the 1950s an African industrial working class was still in an early stage of formation. People living at the bottom of such a society define themselves in politics and ideology not by the economic contribution they make to its perpetuation but rather by their moral rejection of its entirety: they belong to another people, another race, another nation and another country. More through intuition and imagination than judgement and analysis the language spoken by the men of the PAC accorded with the social realities of the time in a way in which that of its rivals did not.

Finally, more importantly than any other consideration, the complexity of the movement which has been partly unravelled in this study should serve to remind us how little as yet scholarship has revealed about the history of black South Africa. In a situation in which so little is known about the popular experience both of oppression itself and of the efforts to challenge it, the least social scientists can do is not to approach this history with ready-made sociological formulae. Here, as elsewhere, theory should be the servant not the governor of the historian.

Conclusion - Notes and References

1. Carter, Gwendoline and Karis, Thomas, From Protest to Challenge, Volume I, Volume 2, Volume 3 and Volume 4, Hoover Institution, Stanford, 1971, 1973, 1977 and 1977. The published collection was part of a much larger documentary project, the results of which are catalogued in: Wynne, S. G., South Africa, Political Materials: A Catalogue of the Carter Karis Collection, Bloomington, South Africa Research Archives Project, Indiana, 1977. Amongst the researchers working for the Karis and Carter team were Sheridan W. Johns and Gail M. Gerhart, both of whom have made their own substantial contributions to the analysis and history of Black South African politics.

2. Successful in the sense that the resistance delayed and impeded the issue of women's passes for several years the whole process being complete in 1963, ten years after its inception. See Tom Lodge, Black Politics in South Africa, Longman, London, 1983, pp. 139-152.

3. Today South African feminist scholars have redressed the balance and the various women's movements of the 1950s is a popular topic amongst researchers. Once again, though, the analysis of women's protest suffers from the disproportionate attention paid to the often ephemeral organisations which were oriented to women. See for an example of this sort of approach: Cherryl Walker, Women and Resistance in South Africa, Onyx Press, London, 1982. Walker's study is centred on the Federation of South African Women, a small body of committed activists (many of them not feminists) who worked in liaison with the ANC's Women's League. Interesting as their activities were, in themselves they cannot provide the basis for a satisfactory analysis of the massive upsurge of women's protest during the 1950s.

4. Gail Gerhart, Black Power in South Africa, University of California Press, Berkerley, 1978.

5. See especially his African Opposition in South Africa, Stanford, 1967, and his Urban Revolt in South Africa, 1960-1964: a case study, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, 1971.

6. Feit, Urban Revolt in South Africa, p. 75.

7. Ibid.

8. See for example Martin Legassick, 'South Africa: Capital Accumulation and Violence', Economy and Society, Volume 3, no. 1, 1974, and Martin Legassick, 'Legislation, Ideology and Economy in post-1948 South Africa', Journal of Southern African Studies, Volume I, no. 1, 1974, for two clear statements of this position.

9. For two opposed interpretations see: Dan O'Meara, 'The 1946 African mineworkers' strike and the political economy of South Africa', Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics, Volume 13, no. 2, 1975, and Richard Monroe, 'Lessons of the 1950s', Inqaba ya Basebenzi (Journal of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the African National Congress), no. 13, March-May 1984.

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(ii) General:

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